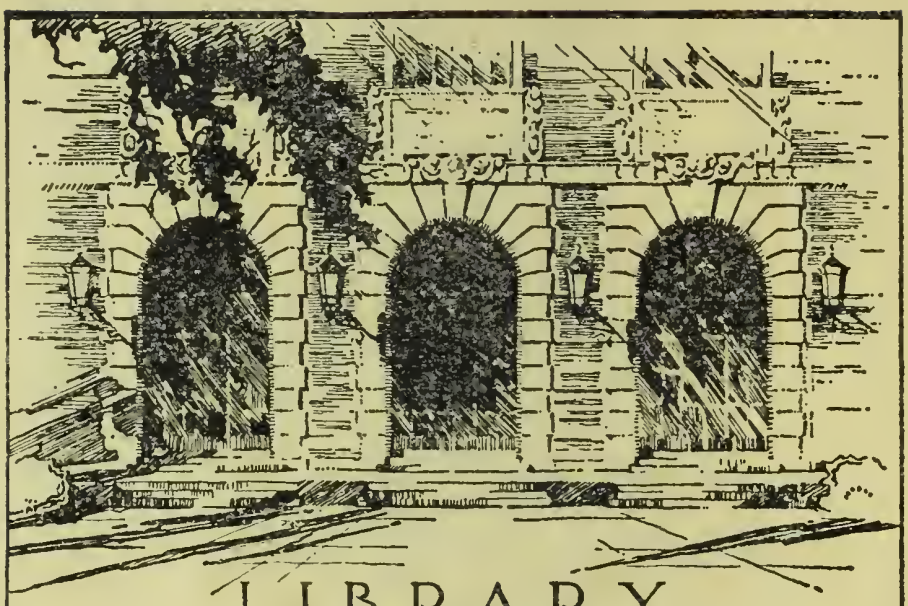

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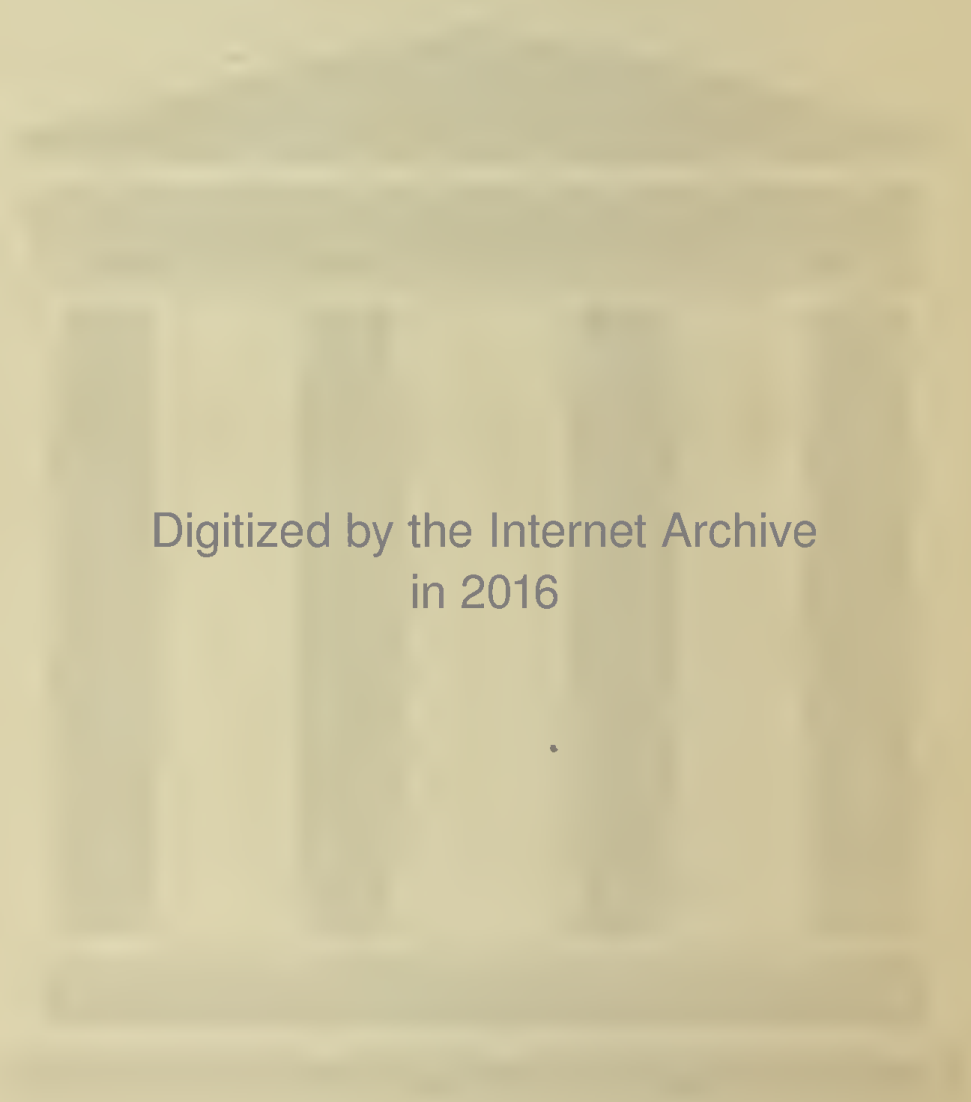

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The Christian Year.

Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear
Attract us still, and passionate exercise
Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
Distinct with signs—through which, in fixed career
As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year
Of England's church,—stupendous mysteries!
Which whoso travels in her bosom, eyes
As he approaches them, with solemn cheer.
Enough for us to cast a transient glance
The circle through.

WORDSWORTH.

THE

CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Thoughts in Verse

FOR THE

SUNDAYS AND HOLYDAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

BY THE

REV. JOHN KEBLE,

PROFESSOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.
Isaiah xxx. 15.

A NEW AMERICAN EDITION.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY THE RIGHT REV. GEORGE W. DOANE, BISHOP OF NEW JERSEY.

NEW YORK:
H. B. DURAND, 49 WHITE-STREET.
1862.

Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1862, by H. B. DURAND, in the Clerk's Office of the United States District Court, for the Southern District of New York.

TO

MY NEXT FRIEND,

AND MORE THAN BROTHER,

THE REV. WILLIAM CROSWELL

RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, BOSTON,

THESE PIOUS BREATHINGS

OF

A KINDRED SPIRIT

ARE MOST AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

G. W. D.

St. Mary's Parsonage,
Burlington, May 27, 1834.

27049 g. Croswell, W.

The annual course of God's great mystery,
"The word made flesh." On that with piercing eye
The angels gaze. On that the Church invites
Her sons to linger. As thereon me muse,
On each strange scene, or altogether wove,
A wondrous tissue like the braided hues
Which blessed the Patriarch's sight, with eye above
Uplifted, faith the dear memorials views,
Signs of past mercy and endearing love.

BISHOP MANT.

INTRODUCTION

BY

THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

The Editor's first acquaintance with the "Christian Year" was accidental. In a little volume of Conversations on the Sacraments and Services of the Church of England, written by a lady, those beautiful lines, at the opening of the piece entitled "Holy Baptism"—

> "Where is it, mothers learn their love?
> In every Church a fountain springs
> O'er which the eternal Dove
> Hovers on softest wings:"—

attracted his attention, and led him to order it through his bookseller. This was in 1828, the year after its publication. The book, when received, was read with unmingled delight; and no volume of uninspired poetry has ever given him such rich and continued satisfaction. It has seemed to him, as Charles the Emperor thought of Florence, a book too pleasant to be read "but only on holydays;"* and he has thought of nothing more expressive of its delightful, tranquillizing spirit, than those lines of holy George Herbert,

> "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky."

---

* "When I sat last on this primrose bank, and looked down these meadows, I thought of them as Charles the Emperor did of the city of Florence; that they were too pleasant to be looked on, but only on holydays."

Isaac Walton, Complete Angler.

From the time of its first reading, the Editor has never ceased to recommend it to his personal friends; and in the "Banner of the Church," and in other ways, to call the public attention to its merits. Many copies have been imported; and there is now an increasing circle of admiring and delighted readers, realizing for our Christian poet, what the greatest o that name desired for himself,

"Fit audience, though few;"—

the "magnanimi pochi," to whom Petrarch, kindred in more respects than one with Milton, made his sublime appeal.

Strangely enough, though the "Christian Year" has passed through more than fifty editions in England,* it found no avenue to the American press, until brought, last summer, to the notice of the intelligent and liberal publishers under whose auspices it now appears. In contemplating an American edition, it was an obvious consideration, that, to a large portion of the admirers of religious poetry, much of the charm of Keble's volume would be lost, by their want of familiarity with the arrangement of the "Christian" or Ecclesiastical "Year," which forms its ground work, the string on which his pearls are hung. The Editor undertook to supply this deficiency; and in doing so, he has aimed

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* "The almost unexampled popularity of the 'Christian Year,' and the 'Rectory of Valehead,' both unquestionably breathing the pure spirit of the olden time, is no unfavourable prognostic of better times to come."—*Bishop Jebb.*

A late bookseller's list enumerates, in 8vo. six editions, in 18mo. twenty-four, and in 32mo. twenty-two. (1844.)

to perform a service far beyond the additional interest which may thus be given to these "Thoughts in verse."

He frankly avows the purpose of rendering the present enterprise subservient to the higher object of extending the knowledge and the influence of religion, as it is exhibited in the order, institutions and services of the Church. The arrangement of the Ecclesiastical Year, he has always regarded as one of the happiest of possible contrivances for arresting the attention, and maintaining the interest of men, in regard to *the great facts* of Christianity, while it appeals most powerfully to the purest and strongest sympathies of the human heart in their behalf. It is an acknowledged principle of philosophy, that whatever is to make the strongest impression on men must be made *visible*,* either to the bodily, or to the "mind's eye." How extensively this principle is applied in practice to the promotion of secular interests, by pictures, statues, processions, pageants, every one has seen. The blessed Saviour recognised its value in the institution of his few simple, beautiful, *visible* sacraments. In the reasonable, scriptural and most becoming appointments of the "Christian Year," the Church, following the example of the divine appointments under the law, has applied this obvious principle to the commemoration of the great facts of Christianity. In the festivals of the Nativity, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the divine Saviour seems, year by year, to be visibly set forth in his mighty and merciful acts, performed for

* "Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.' *Horace.*

our redemption: while in the minor festivals, the blessed weekly feast of Sunday, and the solemn days of preparation and of commemoration, the glorious and endearing theme is constantly kept up before our eyes and hearts: and "the rolling year," in a sense far higher than the poet's,* "is full of" Him. The effect of this practice, where it has been adopted, has been well seen in the increase of the knowledge of salvation, and in the familiarity, to which even children attain, with the "first principles of the doctrine of Christ." In the additional interest which this little volume will create in these, the most important of all subjects, the Editor expects to find his sufficient reward.

The Author of these pieces, it has come incidentally to the knowledge of the Editor, while he holds the most honourable office of Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, is the exemplary and faithful pastor of an humble country congregation, and devotes himself unsparingly to the spiritual welfare of a rustic flock, in which there is scarcely a single family of rank or education. It is in such a school, that the sweetest and most Christian poet of modern days is fitly taught. So it was that Bemerton, and Little Gidden, and Hodnet, became nurseries of strains that shall never die God be thanked, that along the tract of ages he still scatters spirits like Hooker's, and Herbert's, and Walton's, and Ken's, and Ferrar's, and Jeremy Taylor's, and Heber's, and Keble's,—to show how nearly the human may by grace attain to the angelic nature, to enchant our spirits here by the prolusion of those seraphic strains which in heaven are the continual occupa-

* Thomson's Hymn to the Seasons.

tion and enjoyment of the saints,—"singing on earth," as Isaak Walton said of Herbert, "such hymns and anthems as the angels, and he, and Mr. Ferrar now sing in heaven."

In conclusion, the "Christian Year," apart from its high poetical merit, is recommended most earnestly for its pure, affectionate, and elevating character, as *a family book*. The taste which can appreciate its excellencies, is a Christian taste. The meditation of its eminently spiritual strains will tend to spiritualize the heart. And the Christian home, where it is made a household book, will find it fruitful, above almost every book of human origin, in homebred charities and innocent delights. "Then came the long quiet evening," writes one who can well estimate the various merits of a volume which she has done much to draw into general use, "when some of us gathered, as closely as possible, round the bright fire, and listened, while one and another dear voice read some passage from Keble's Christian Year. Soothing, beautiful poetry! well calculated to lift the heart above the cares of this troublesome world, and to light the path with the sunshine of heaven."* G. W. D.

St. Mary's Parsonage,
Burlington, July 1, 1834.

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* Scenes in our Parish, by a Country Parson's Daughter.

*** Throughout the volume the notes of the American Editor are enclosed in brackets.

AUTHOR'S ADVERTISEMENT

Next to a sound rule of faith, there is nothing of so much consequence as a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion: and it is the peculiar happiness of the Church of England, to possess, in her authorized formularies, an ample and secure provision for both. But in times of much leisure and unbounded curiosity, when excitement of every kind is sought after with a morbid eagerness, this part of the merit of our Liturgy is likely in some measure to be lost, on many even of its sincere admirers: the very tempers, which most require such discipline, setting themselves, in general, most decidedly against it.

The object of the present publication will be attained, if any person find assistance from it in bringing his own thoughts and feelings into more entire unison with those recommended and exemplified in the Prayer Book. The work does not furnish a complete series of compositions; being, in many parts, rather adapted with more or less propriety to the successive portions of the Liturgy, than originally suggested by them. Something has been added at the end concerning the several Occasional Services: which constitute, from their personal and domestic nature, the most perfect instance of that *soothing* tendency in the Prayer Book, which it is the chief purpose of these pages to exhibit.

May 30, 1827.

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THE

CHRISTIAN YEAR.

MORNING.

His compassions fail not. They are new every morning.—*Lament.* iii. 22, 23.

Hues of the rich unfolding morn,
That, ere the glorious sun be born,
By some soft touch invisible
Around his path are taught to swell;—

Thou rustling breeze, so fresh and gay,
That dancest forth at opening day,
And brushing by with joyous wing,
Wakenest each little leaf to sing;—

Ye fragrant clouds of dewy steam,
By which deep grove and tangled stream
Pay, for soft rains in season given,
Their tribute to the genial heaven;—

Why waste your treasures of delight
Upon our thankless, joyless sight?
Who, day by day, to sin awake,
Seldom of heaven and you partake?

Oh! timely happy, timely wise,
Hearts that with rising morn arise!
Eyes that the beam celestial view,
Which evermore makes all things new!*

* Revelation xxi. 5.

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
Be set, to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see:
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

As for some dear familiar strain
Untired we ask, and ask again,
Ever, in its melodious store,
Finding a spell unheard before.

Such is the bliss of souls serene,
When they have sworn, and steadfast mean,
Counting the cost, in all to espy
Their God, in all themselves deny.

O could we learn that sacrifice,
What lights would all around us rise!
How would our hearts with wisdom talk
Along life's dullest, dreariest walk!

We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
Our neighbour and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky:

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God.

Seek we no more; content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease,
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go:—
The secret this of rest below

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love
Fit us for perfect rest above;
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.

EVENING.

Abide with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent.—*St. Luke* xxiv. 29.

'T is gone, that bright and orbed blaze,
Fast fading from our wistful gaze;
Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light.

In darkness and in weariness
The traveller on his way must press,
No gleam to watch on tree or tower,
Whiling away the lonesome hour.

Sun of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near:
Oh may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes.

When round thy wondrous works below
My searching rapturous glance I throw,
Tracing out Wisdom, Power and Love,
In earth or sky, in stream or grove;—

Or by the light thy words disclose
Watch Time's full river as it flows,
Scanning thy gracious Providence,
Where not too deep for mortal sense;

When with dear friends sweet talk I hold
And all the flowers of life unfold:*
Let not my heart within me burn,
Except in all I Thee discern.†

When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live:
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

Thou Framer of the light and dark,
Steer through the tempest thine own ark:

---

* ["Les plaisirs sont les fleurs que notre divine Maitre,
Dans les ronces du monde, autour de nous fait naitre,
Chacun a sa saison."]

† ["Domine, fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum onec requiescat in te."—*St. Augustine.*]

Amid the howling wintry sea
We are in port if we have Thee.*

The Rulers of this Christian land,
'Twixt Thee and us ordain'd to stand,—
Guide Thou their course, O Lord, aright:
Let all do all as in thy sight.

Oh! by thine own sad burden, borne
So meekly up the hill of scorn,
Teach Thou thy priests their daily cross
To bear as thine, nor count it loss!

If some poor wandering child of thine
Have spurn'd to-day the voice divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin:
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick: enrich the poor
With blessings from thy boundless store:
Be every mourner's sleep to-night
Like infant's slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take:
Till in the ocean of thy love
We lose ourselves in heaven above.

---

* Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.—*St. John* vi. 21.

ADVENT SUNDAY.*

Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.—*Romans* xiii. 11. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that, in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*†]

Awake—again the Gospel trump is blown—
From year to year it swells with louder tone;
From year to year the signs of wrath
Are gathering round the Judge's path:
Strange words fulfill'd, and mighty works achieved,
And truth in all the world both hated and believed.

---

* [The beginning of that season which commemorates the Advent or *coming* of our blessed Lord. It has immediate reference to his *first* coming in the flesh, and so is designed to prepare us for the due celebration of the festival of the nativity, commonly called Christmas Day. It has ultimate reference to his *second* coming in glory, and so is designed to aid us in preparation for the day of final judgment. The Advent Sundays, of which this is the first, are the *four* next preceding Christmas. The *first* Sunday in Advent is always the Sunday *nearest* to the festival of St. Andrew, whether before or after. If that Sunday fall on the last day of November, then St. Andrew's Day and Advent Sunday coincide. See note on St. Andrew's Day.]

† [Throughout the "Christian Year," the collect for the day, in the book of Common Prayer, will be inserted.]

Awake! why linger in the gorgeous town,
Sworn liegemen of the cross and thorny crown?
Up, from your beds of sloth, for shame,
Speed to the eastern mount like flame,
Nor wonder, should ye find your king in tears,
Even with the loud Hosanna ringing in his ears.

Alas! no need to rouse them: long ago
They are gone forth to swell Messiah's show;
With glittering robes and garlands sweet
They strew the ground beneath his feet:
All but your hearts are there—O doom'd to prove
The arrows wing'd in heaven for Faith that will not love!*

Meanwhile he paces through th' adoring crowd,
Calm as the march of some majestic cloud,
That o'er wild scenes of ocean-war
Holds its course in heaven afar:
Even so, heart-searching Lord, as years roll on,†
Thou keepest silent watch from thy triumphal throne:

Even so, the world is thronging round to gaze
On the dread vision of the latter days,
Constrain'd to own Thee, but in heart
Prepared to take Barabbas' part

* ["And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way: others cut down branches from the trees and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, Hosanna to the Son of David."—Here was *faith* in Jesus as the Messiah. The sad catastrophe of the crucifixion too soon proved that it was not the faith which "worketh by *love*."]

† [So the apostles, at the election of Matthias, addressing Jesus, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the heart."]

"Hosanna" now, to-morrow "Crucify,"
The changeful burden still of their rude lawless cry.

Yet, in that throng of selfish hearts untrue,
Thy sad eye rests upon thy faithful few;
Children and childlike souls are there,
Blind Bartimeus' humble prayer,
And Lazarus waken'd from his four days' sleep,
Enduring life again, that Passover to keep.

And fast beside the olive-border'd way
Stands the bless'd home, where Jesus deign'd to stay,
The peaceful home, to zeal sincere
And heavenly contemplation dear,
Where Martha loved to wait with reverence meet,
And wiser Mary linger'd at thy sacred feet.

Still, through decaying ages as they glide,
Thou lov'st thy chosen remnant to divide;
Sprinkled along the waste of years,
Full many a soft green isle appears:
Pause where we may upon the desert road,
Some shelter is in sight, some sacred safe abode.

When withering blasts of error swept the sky,*
And Love's last flower seem'd fain to droop and die,
How sweet, how lone, the ray benign,
On shelter'd nooks of Palestine!
Then to his early home did Love repair,†
And cheer'd his sickening heart with his own native air.

* Arianism in the fourth century.

† See St. Jerome's Works, i. 123, edit. Erasm. [The letters of Jerome are full of rural pictures of

Years roll away: again the tide of crime
Has swept thy footsteps from the favour'd clime.
Where shall the holy Cross find rest?
On a crown'd monarch's* mailed breast:

---

exceeding beauty. He evidently wrote *con amore*, with a painter's eye, and a poet's feeling. "Having passed," he says, "so much of my life in agitation, my poor bark now tossed with storms, now shattered against rocks, I betake myself to the retirement of the country, as to a safe and peaceful port. Here, plain bread, roots raised by my own hands, and milk, the peasant's luxury, supply me cheap but wholesome food. So living, we neither suffer hinderance in our devotions from drowsiness, nor in our studies from satiety. Is it summer,—our trees tempt us with their sheltering shade. Is it autumn,—the genial temperature of the air delights us, while the fallen leaves afford a soft and quiet couch. Is it spring,—flowers enamel the ground, and the tuneful birds lend to our hymns their sweet accompaniment. And even when winter comes, with storms and sleet, we have wood so cheap that we need neither sleep nor watch unwarmed." But there was a charm for Jerome, in his retirement, greater even than this. To the eye of a painter and the fancy of a poet, he added, what is far more fertile in enjoyment, the heart of a Christian; and in his rustic seclusion this had abundant gratification. "Here," says he, "clownish though we are, we are all Christians. Psalms alone break the pervading stillness. The ploughman is singing hallelujahs while he turns his furrow. The reaper solaces his toil with hymns. The vineyard dresser, as he prunes his vines, chants something from the strains of David. These are our songs, and such the notes with which our love is vocal."—I find in the Annals of Modern Missions a beautiful coincidence with the sentiment of Jerome. "It is now very different from what it used to be," said a native assistant to the Moravian missionaries in Greenland; "everywhere you hear the people singing psalms."]

* St. Louis in the thirteenth century.

Like some bright angel o'er the darkling scene
Through court and camp he holds his heavenward
course serene.*

A fouler vision yet; an age of light,
Light without love, glares on the aching sight:
Oh! who can tell how calm and sweet,
Meek Walton! shows thy green retreat,†
When wearied with the tale thy times disclose,
The eye first finds thee out in thy secure repose?

Thus bad and good their several warnings give
Of His approach, whom none may see and live:
Faith's ear, with awful still delight,
Counts them like minute bells at night,
Keeping the heart awake till dawn of morn,
While to her funeral pile this aged world is
borne.‡

But what are heaven's alarms to hearts that
cower
In wilful slumber, deepening every hour,

*[Even Gibbon was constrained to say of him, "that he united the virtues of a king, a hero and a man; that his martial spirit was tempered with the love of private and public justice: and that Louis was the father of his people, the friend of his neighbours, and the terror of infidels."]

†["Honest Izaak." See his "Complete Angler," which has been well called "an exquisitely pleasing performance;" and his incomparable lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Herbert and Sanderson.]

‡["The world is grown old, and her pleasures are
past;
The world is grown old, and her form cannot last;
The world is grown old, and trembles for fear,
For sorrows abound, and judgment is near."
Bishop Heber]

That draw their curtains closer round,
The nearer swells the trumpet's sound?
Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down and die,
Touch us with chastening hand, and make us feel Thee nigh.*

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*[Yet once again thy sign shall be upon the heavens display'd,
And earth and its inhabitants be terribly afraid,
For not in weakness clad thou com'st, our woes, our sins to bear,
But girt with all thy Father's might, his vengeance to declare.

The terrors of that awful day, oh! who can understand?
Or who abide when thou in wrath shalt lift thy holy hand?
The earth shall quake, the sea shall roar, the sun in heaven grow pale;
But thou hast sworn, and wilt not change, thy faithful shall not fail.

Then grant us, Saviour, so to pass our time in trembling here,
That when upon the clouds of heaven thy glory shall appear,
Uplifting high our joyful heads, in triumph we may rise,
And enter, with thine angel train, thy palace in the skies! G W. D.]

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.—*St. Luke*, xxi. 28. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*]

Not till the freezing blast is still,
Till freely leaps the sparkling rill,
And gales sweep soft from summer skies,
As o'er a sleeping infant's eyes
A mother's kiss—ere calls like these,
No sunny gleam awakes the trees,
Nor dare the tender flowerets show
Their bosoms to th' uncertain glow.

Why then, in sad and wintry time,
Her heavens all dark with doubt and crime,
Why lifts the Church her drooping head,
As though her evil hour were fled?
Is she less wise than leaves of spring,
Or birds that cower with folded wing?
What sees she in this lowering sky
To tempt her meditative eye?

She has a charm, a word of fire,
A pledge of love that cannot tire;
By tempests, earthquakes, and by wars,
By rushing waves and falling stars,

By every sign her Lord foretold,
She sees the world is waxing old,*
And through that last and direst storm
Descries by faith her Saviour's form.

Not surer does each tender gem,
Set in the fig tree's polish'd stem,
Foreshow the summer season bland,
Than these dread signs thy mighty hand:
But, oh! frail hearts and spirits dark!
The season's flight unwarned we mark
But miss the Judge behind the door,†
For all the light of sacred lore:‡

Yet is He there: beneath our eaves
Each sound his wakeful ear receives:
Hush, idle words, and thoughts of ill,
Your Lord is listening; peace, be still.§
Christ watches by a Christian's hearth,
Be silent, "vain deluding mirth,"
Till in thine alter'd voice be known
Somewhat of resignation's tone.

But chiefly ye should lift your gaze
Above the world's uncertain haze,
And look with calm unwavering eye
On the bright fields beyond the sky,

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* The world hath lost his youth, and the times begin to wax old.—2 *Esdras* xiv. 10.

† See St. James v. 9.

‡ [Notwithstanding all the light of Scripture.]

§ Ita fabulantur, ut qui sciant Dominum audire. *Tertull. Apolog.* p. 36, edit. Rigalt.

Ye, who your Lord's commission bear,
His way of mercy to prepare:
Angels* He calls you; be your strife
To lead on earth an angel's life.

Think not of rest; though dreams be sweet,
Start up, and ply your heavenward feet.
Is not God's oath upon your head,
Ne'er to sink back on slothful bed?
Never again your loins untie,
Nor let your torches waste and die,
Till, when the shadows thickest fall,
Ye hear your Master's midnight call!

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE TRAVELLERS.

What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.—*St. Matt.* xi. 7. 8. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[O Lord Jesus Christ, who, at thy first coming, didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that, at thy second coming to judge the world, we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

* [*Angels*, from the Greek term, meaning messengers or apostles.]

WHAT went you out to see
O'er the rude sandy lea,
Where stately Jordan flows by many a palm,
Or where Gennesaret's wave
Delights the flowers to lave,
That o'er her western slope breathe airs of balm?

All through the summer night,
Those blossoms red and bright*
Spread their soft breasts, unheeding, to the breeze,
Like hermits watching still
Around the sacred hill,
Where erst our Saviour watched upon his knees.

The paschal moon above
Seems like a saint to rove,
Left shining in the world with Christ alone;
Below, the lake's still face
Sleeps sweetly in th' embrace
Of mountains terraced high with mossy stone.

Here may we sit and dream
Over the heavenly theme,
Till to our soul the former days return;
Till on the grassy bed,†
Where thousands once he fed,
The world's incarnate Maker we discern.

O cross no more the main,
Wandering so wild and vain,

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* Rhododendrons: with which the western bank of the lake is said to be clothed down to the water's edge.

† ["Now there was much grass in this place."—*St. John* vi. 10.]

To count the reeds that tremble in the wind,
On listless dalliance bound,
Like children gazing round,
Who on God's works no seal of Godhead find;

Bask not in courtly bower,
Or sun-bright hall of power;
Pass Babel quick, and seek the holy land;
From robes of Tyrian dye
Turn with undazzled eye
To Bethlehem's glade, or Carmel's haunted strand.

Or choose thee out a cell
In Kedron's storied dell,
Beside the springs of love, that never die;
Among the olives kneel,
The chill night-blast to feel,
And watch the moon that saw thy Master's agony.*

Then rise at dawn of day,
And wind thy thoughtful way,
Where rested once the Temple's stately shade,
With due feet tracing round
The city's northern bound,
To th' other holy garden, where the Lord was laid.†

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* [The passover, when our Saviour suffered, was always at the full moon.]

† [It is worthy of notice that gardens have been the scenes of the three most stupendous events that have occurred on earth—the temptation and fall of man, the agony of the Son of God, and his resurrection from the grave.]

Who thus alternate see
His death and victory,
Rising and falling as on angel wings,
They, while they seem to roam,
Draw daily nearer home,
Their heart untravell'd still adores the King of kings.*

Or, if at home they stay,
Yet are they, day by day,
In spirit journeying through the glorious land,
Not for light fancy's reed,
Nor honour's purple meed,
Nor gifted prophet's lore, nor science' wondrous wand.

But more than prophet, more
Than angels can adore
With face unveil'd, is He they go to seek:
Blessed be God, whose grace
Shows him in every place
To homeliest hearts of pilgrims pure and meek.

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* ["My heart untravelled still returns to thee."
Goldsmith's Traveller.]

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.*

DIMNESS.

The eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.—*Isaiah* xxxii. 3. [*First Lesson in the Evening Service.*]

[O Lord, raise up, we pray thee, thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of thy Son, our Lord: to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*]

Of the bright things in earth and air
How little can the heart embrace!
Soft shades and gleaming lights are there—
I know it well, but cannot trace.

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* [The lines which follow are from the pen of the beloved friend to whom this volume is inscribed. Its pages will afford other evidence of the justice with which his name has been associated with the honoured name of Keble, as "a kindred spirit." Were he aware of the designed association, his gentle and retiring nature would, I know, forbid it. But one who, for nine years, was with him almost daily, and shared his secret thoughts, must claim to know him better than he knows himself; and he does not fear that Keble will not welcome the companionship.

ADVENT.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice The Lord is at hand."—*Epistle for the last Sunday in Advent.*

Now gird your patient loins again,
Your wasting torches trim!
The Chief of all the sons of men,
Who will not welcome him?

Mine eye unworthy seems to read
  One page of Nature's beauteous book:
It lies before me, fair outspread—
  I only cast a wishful look.

I cannot paint to Memory's eye
  The scene, the glance, I dearest love—
Unchanged themselves, in me they die,
  Or faint, or false, their shadows prove.

In vain, with dull and tuneless ear,
  I linger by soft Music's cell,
And in my heart of hearts would hear
  What to her own she deigns to tell.

'Tis misty all, both sight and sound—
  I only know 'tis fair and sweet—
'Tis wandering on enchanted ground
  With dizzy brow and tottering feet.

Rejoice, the hour is near! At length
  The Journeyer on his way
Comes in the greatness of his strength,
  To keep his holy day.

With cheerful hymns and garlands sweet
  Along his wintry road,
Conduct him to his green retreat,
  His shelter'd safe abode;
Fill all his court with sacred songs,
  And from the temple wall
Wave verdure o'er the joyful throngs
  That crowd his festival.

And still more greenly in the mind
  Store up the hopes sublime
Which then were born for all mankind,
  So blessed was the time;
And underneath these hallowed eaves
  A Saviour will be born
In every heart that him receives
  On his triumphal morn.

Rev. William Croswell.]

But, patience! there may come a time
When these dull ears shall scan aright
Strains, that outring earth's drowsy chime,
As heaven outshines the taper's light.

These eyes, that, dazzled now and weak,
At glancing motes in sunshine wink,
Shall see the King's* full glory break,
Nor from the blissful vision shrink:

In fearless love and hope uncloy'd
For ever on that ocean bright
Empower'd to gaze; and undestroy'd,
Deeper and deeper plunge in light.

Though scarcely now their laggard glance
Reach to an arrow's flight, that day
They shall behold, and not in trance,
The region "very far away."

If Memory sometimes at our spell
Refuse to speak, or speak amiss,
We shall not need her where we dwell
Ever in sight of all our bliss.

Meanwhile, if over sea or sky
Some tender lights unnoticed fleet,
Or on loved features dawn and die,
Unread, to us, their lesson sweet;

Yet are there saddening sights around,
Which Heaven, in mercy, spares us too,
And we see far in holy ground,
If duly purged our mental view.

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* Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.—*Isaiah* xxxiii. 17.

The distant landscape draws not nigh
For all our gazing; but the soul
That upward looks may still descry
Nearer, each day, the brightening goal.

And thou, too curious ear, that fain
Wouldst thread the maze of harmony,
Content thee with one simple strain,
The lowlier, sure, the worthier thee;

Till thou art duly trained, and taught
The concord sweet of love divine:
Then, with that inward music fraught,
For ever rise, and sing, and shine.

CHRISTMAS DAY.*

[DECEMBER 25.]

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God.—*St. Luke* ii. 13. [*Second Morning Lesson.*]

[Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; grant that we, being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.]

WHAT sudden blaze of song
Spreads o'er th' expanse of heaven?
In waves of light it thrills along,
Th' angelic signal given—

* [The name given to this festival in the Prayer Book, sufficiently describes its objects,—"The nativity of our Lord, or the birth-day of Christ, commonly called Christmas Day."

"Glory to God!" from yonder central fire
Flows out the echoing lay beyond the starry choir;

Like circles widening round
Upon a clear blue river,
Orb after orb, the wondrous sound
Is echoed on for ever:
"Glory to God on high, on earth be peace,
And love towards men of love*—salvation and release."

Yet stay, before thou dare
To join that festal throng;
Listen and mark what gentle air
First stirr'd the tide of song;
'Tis not, "the Saviour born in David's home,
To whom for power and health obedient worlds should come:"—

'Tis not "the Christ the Lord:"—
With fix'd adoring look
The choir of angels caught the word,
Nor yet their silence broke:
But when they heard the sign, where Christ should be,
In sudden light they shone and heavenly harmony.

Wrapp'd in his swaddling bands,
And in his manger laid,
The hope and glory of all lands
Is come to the world's aid:
No peaceful home upon his cradle smiled,
Guests rudely went and came, where slept the royal child.

* I have ventured to adopt the reading of the Vulgate, as being generally known through Pergolesi's beautiful composition, "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax *hominibus bonæ voluntatis*."

But where thou dwellest, Lord,
No other thought should be,
Once duly welcomed and adored,
How should I part with Thee?
Bethlehem must lose Thee soon, but Thou wilt grace
The single heart to be thy sure abiding-place.

Thee, on the bosom laid
Of a pure virgin mind,
In quiet ever, and in shade,
Shepherd and sage may find;
They, who have bow'd untaught to nature's sway,
And they, who follow truth along her star-paved way.

The pastoral spirits first*
Approach Thee, Babe divine,
For they in lowly thoughts are nursed,
Meet for thy lowly shrine:
Sooner than they should miss where Thou dost dwell,
Angels from heaven will stoop to guide them to thy cell.

Still, as the day comes round
For Thee to be reveal'd,
By wakeful shepherds Thou art found,
Abiding in the field.

---

*[A beautiful allusion to the incidents described in that sweet pastoral hymn,

"While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground," &c.

There is much better poetry in the world than this: but it may be well doubted whether there are two other lines that will thrill as many hearts, or brighten as many eyes.]

All through the wintry heaven and chill night air,*
In music and in light thou dawnest on their prayer.

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* [The determination of this holy festival to the day on which the Christian world agrees to celebrate it, must be allowed to be an arbitrary decision. But its occurrence in the winter certainly gives rise to peculiar and delightful associations and usages. The poets have not failed to improve this circumstance. So in that glorious hymn of Milton, on the morning of Christ's nativity,—

"It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Has doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the Sun, her lusty paramour."

The same circumstance is beautifully spiritualized in the following lines on "Christmas Eve,"—having reference to the becoming practice of dressing the churches at that season with evergreens, "the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together." The author of them has more "unwritten poetry" in him than any man I know.

The thickly woven boughs they wreathe
Through every hallow'd fane
A soft reviving odour breathe
Of summer's gentle reign;
And rich the ray of mild green light
Which, like an emerald's glow,
Comes struggling through the latticed height
Upon the crowds below.

O let the streams of solemn thought
Which in those temples rise,
From deeper sources spring than aught
Dependent on the skies

O faint not ye for fear—
What though your wandering sheep,
Reckless of what they see and hear,
Lie lost in wilful sleep?
High Heaven in mercy to your sad annoy
Still greets you with glad tidings of immortal joy.

Think on th' eternal home
The Saviour left for you;
Think on the Lord most holy, come
To dwell with hearts untrue:
So shall ye tread untired his pastoral ways,
And in the darkness sing your carol of high praise.

Then, though the summer's pride departs,
And winter's withering chill
Rests on the cheerless woods, our hearts
Shall be unchanging still.

Rev. William Croswell.]

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.*

[DECEMBER 26.]

He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.—*Acts* vii. 55. [*Scripture appointed as the Epistle for the Day.*]

[Grant, O Lord, that in all our sufferings here upon earth, for the testimony of thy truth, we may steadfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; and being filled with the Holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors, by the example of thy first martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God, to succour all those who suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*]

As rays around the source of light
Stream upward ere he glow in sight,
And, watching by his future flight,
Set the clear heavens on fire;
So on the King of martyrs wait
Three chosen bands, in royal state,†
And all earth owns of good and great
Is gather'd in that choir.

* ["Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," was one of the seven deacons first ordained, and had the distinguished honour of being the first martyr to the Christian faith. He was stoned to death.]

† Wheatley on the Common Prayer, c. v. sect. iv. 2. "As there are three kinds of Martyrdom, the first both in will and deed, which is the highest: the second in will but not in deed; the third in deed but not in will; so the Church commemorates these martyrs in the same order: St. Stephen first, who suffered death both

One presses on, and welcomes death:
One calmly yields his willing breath,
Nor slow, nor hurrying, but in faith
Content to die or live:
And some, the darlings of their Lord,
Play smiling with the flame and sword,
And, ere they speak, to his sure word
Unconscious witness give.

Foremost and nearest to his throne,
By perfect robes of triumph known,
And likest him in look and tone,
The holy Stephen kneels,
With steadfast gaze, as when the sky
Flew open to his fainting eye,
Which, like a fading lamp, flash'd high,
Seeing what death conceals.

Well might you guess what vision bright
Was present to his raptured sight,
Even as reflected streams of light
Their solar source betray—
The glory which our God surrounds,*
The Son of man, th' atoning wounds—
He sees them all; and earth's dull bounds
Are melting fast away.

He sees them all—no other view
Could stamp the Saviour's likeness true,
Or with his love so deep embrue
Man's sullen heart and gross—

---

in will and deed; St. John the Evangelist next, who suffered martyrdom in will but not in deed; the Holy Innocents last, who suffered in deed but not in will."

* ["But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly to heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."]

"Jesu, do Thou my soul receive:*
Jesu, do Thou my foes forgive;"—
He who would learn that prayer, must live
Under the holy Cross;

He, though he seem on earth to move,
Must glide in air like gentle dove,
From yon unclouded depths above
Must draw his purer breath;
Till men behold his angel face†
All radiant with celestial grace,‡
Martyr all o'er, and meet to trace
The lines of Jesus' death.

* ["And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep."]

† And all that were in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.—*Acts* vi. 15.

‡ [With awful dread his murderers shook,
As, radiant and serene,
The lustre of his dying look
Was like an angel's seen,
Or Moses' face of paly light,
When down the mount he trod,
All glowing from the glorious sight
And presence of his God.

To us, with all his constancy,
Be his rapt vision given,
To look above by faith, and see
Revealments bright of heaven,
And power to speak our triumphs out
As our last hour draws near,
While neither clouds of fear nor doubt
Before our view appear.

Rev. William Croswell.]

ST. JOHN'S DAY.*

[DECEMBER 27.]

Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.—*St. John.* xii. 21, 22. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, that it, being instructed by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John, may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

"LORD, and what shall this man do?"
Ask'st thou, Christian, for thy friend?
If his love for Christ be true,
Christ hath told thee of his end
This is he whom God approves,
This is he whom Jesus loves.

Ask not of him more than this,
Leave it in his Saviour's breast,
Whether, early call'd to bliss,
He in youth shall find his rest,

---

*[This is the festival of John, the Evangelist and Apostle, the son of Zebedee, and brother of James the Greater. He was especially distinguished during the lifetime of Jesus, as "the beloved disciple." Besides the gospel which bears his name, he wrote three Epistles and the Apocalypse. He lived to be nearly a hundred years old; and alone, of all the Apostles, died a natural death. When he was too infirm through age to make a longer discourse, his constant exhortation to the Christians at Ephesus, where he lived, was, "Little children, love one another!"

Or armed in his station wait
Till his Lord be at the gate.

Whether in his lonely course
(Lonely, not forlorn) he stay,
Or with love's supporting force
Cheat the toil and chear the way:
Leave it all in His high hand,
Who doth hearts as streams command.*

Gales from heaven, if so He will,
Sweeter melodies can wake
On the lonely mountain rill
Than the meeting waters make.
Who hath the Father and the Son
May be left, but not alone.

Sick or healthful, slave or free,
Wealthy, or despised and poor —
What is that to him or thee,
So his love to Christ endure?
When the shore is won at last,
Who will count the billows past?

Only, since our souls will shrink
At the touch of natural grief,
When our earthly loved ones sink,
Lend us, Lord, thy sure relief;
Patient hearts, their pain to see,
And thy grace, to follow Thee.

* The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.— *Proverbs* xxi. 1.

THE HOLY INNOCENTS.*

[DECEMBER 28.]

These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.—*Revelation* xiv. 4. [*Scripture appointed for the Epistle.*]

[O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength, and madest infants to glorify thee by their deaths: mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by thy grace, that, by the innocency of our lives and constancy of our faith even unto death, we may glorify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

SAY, ye celestial guards, who wait
In Bethlehem, round the Saviour's palace gate,
Say, who are these on golden wings,
That hover o'er the new-born King of kings,
Their palms and garlands telling plain
That they are of the glorious martyr train,†

* [The Church on this day commemorates the infants slain in Bethlehem, by the command of Herod, in the vain hope of destroying the Lord's Anointed,—then, by the warning of an angel, safe in Egypt. As a service commemorative of children, it is sometimes called "Childermas Day."]

† [Hail, infant sufferers! martyr'd flow'rets, hail!
Cut off by ruthless knife,
Just at the gate of life,
Ye fell, as new-born roses fall when scatter'd by the gale.
Earliest of all were ye, that suffer'd for the word,
Sweet firstlings of that slaughter'd flock, so precious to the Lord;
And round his heavenly altar now, his high uplifted throne,
Ye guileless sport the crown and palm your martyrdom hath won.
Imitated from Prudentius.—G. W. D.]

Next to yourselves ordain'd to praise
His name, and brighten as on Him they gaze?

But where their spoils and trophies? where
The glorious dint a martyr's shield should bear?
How chance no cheek among them wears
The deep-worn trace of penitential tears,
But all is bright and smiling love,
As if, fresh borne from Eden's happy grove,
They had flown here, their King to see,
Nor ever had been heirs of dark mortality?

Ask, and some angel will reply,
"These, like yourselves, were born to sin and die,
But ere the poison root was grown,
God set his seal, and mark'd them for his own.
Baptized in blood for Jesus' sake,
Now underneath the Cross their bed they make,
Not to be scared from that sure rest
By frighten'd mother's shriek, or warrior's waving crest."

Mindful of these, the first-fruits sweet
Borne by the suffering Church, her Lord to greet;
Bless'd Jesus ever loved to trace
The "innocent brightness" of an infant's face.
He raised them in his holy arms,
He bless'd them from the world and all its harms:
Heirs though they were of sin and shame,
He bless'd them in his own and in his Father's name.

Then, as each fond unconscious child
On th' everlasting Parent sweetly smiled,
(Like infants sporting on the shore,
That tremble not at Ocean's boundless roar,)
Were they not present to thy thought,
All souls that in their cradles thou hast bought?

But chiefly these, who died for Thee,
That thou might'st live, for them a sadder death to see.

And next to these, thy gracious word
Was, as a pledge of benediction, stored
For Christian mothers, while they moan
Their treasured hopes, just born, baptized, and gone.
Oh! joy for Rachel's broken heart!
She and her babes shall meet no more to part
So dear to Christ her pious haste
To trust them in his arms, for ever safe embraced.

She dares not grudge to leave them there,
Where to behold them was her heart's first prayer;
She dares not grieve—but she must weep,
As her pale placid martyr sinks to sleep,
Teaching so well and silently
How, at the Shepherd's call, the lamb should die:
How happier far than life the end
Of souls that infant-like beneath their burden bend.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

THE SUN-DIAL OF AHAZ.

So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.—*Isaiah* xxxviii. 8. (Compare *Josh.* x. 13.) [*First Evening Lesson, Church of England Prayer Book.*]

[Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that we, being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

'Tis true, of old th' unchanging sun
His daily course refused to run;
The pale moon hurrying to the west
Paused at a mortal's call,* to aid
Th' avenging storm of war, that laid
Seven guilty realms at once† on earth's defiled breast.

But can it be, one suppliant tear
Should stay the ever-moving sphere?
A sick man's lowly breathed sigh,
When from the world he turns away,‡
And hides his weary eyes to pray,
Should change your mystic dance, ye wanderers of the sky?

We too, O Lord, would fain command,
As then, thy wonder-working hand,
And backward force the waves of time,
That now so swift and silent bear
Our restless bark from year to year;
Help us to pause and mourn to Thee our tale of crime.

Bright hopes, that erst the bosom warm'd,
And vows, too pure to be perform'd,
And prayers blown wide by gales of care;—
These, and such faint half-waking dreams,
Like stormy lights on mountain streams,
Wavering and broken all, athwart the conscience glare.

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* [Joshua.]

† [The Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.]

‡ And Hezekiah turned his face towards the wall, and prayed unto the Lord.—*Isaiah* xxxviii. 2.

How shall we 'scape th' o'erwhelming past?
Can spirits broken, joys o'ercast,
And eyes that never more may smile,—
Can these th' avenging bolt delay,
Or win us back one little day,
The bitterness of death to soften and beguile?

Father and lover of our souls!
Though darkly round thine anger rolls,
Thy sunshine smiles beneath the gloom;
Thou seek'st to warn us, not confound,
Thy showers would pierce the harden'd ground,
And win it to give out its brightness and perfume.

Thou smil'st on us in wrath, and we,
Even in remorse, would smile on Thee;
The tears that bathe our offer'd hearts,
We would not have them stain'd and dim,
But dropped from wings of seraphim,
All glowing with the light accepted love imparts.

Time's waters will not ebb nor stay,
Power cannot change them, but love may;
What cannot be, love counts it done.
Deep in the heart, her searching view
Can read where faith is fix'd and true,
Through shades of setting life can see Heaven's work begun.

O Thou, who keep'st the key of love,
Open thy fount, eternal Dove,
And overflow this heart of mine,*

* ["—— send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues; without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee." *Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday.*]

E-targing as it fills with Thee,
Till in one blaze of charity
Care and remorse are lost, like motes in light divine;

Till, as each moment wafts us higher,
By every gush of pure desire,
And high-breathed hope of joys above,
By every sacred sigh we heave,
Whole years of folly we outlive,
In His unerring sight, who measures life by love

THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST.*

[JANUARY 1.]

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands.—*Colossians* ii. 11. [*Second Evening Lesson.*]

[Almighty God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit, that, our hearts and all our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

THE year begins with Thee,
And thou beginn'st with woe,
To let the world of sinners see
That blood for sin must flow.

* [Jesus Christ, taking our nature upon him, and becoming obedient to the law for our sakes, was circumcised on the eighth day, that he might "fulfil all righteousness."]

Thine infant cries, O Lord,
Thy tears upon the breast,
Are not enough—the legal sword
Must do its stern behest.

Like sacrificial wine
Poured on a victim's head,
Are those few precious drops of thin
Now first to offering led.

They are the pledge and seal
Of Christ's unswerving faith,
Given to his Sire, our souls to heal,
Although it cost his death.

They to his Church of old,
To each true Jewish heart,
In Gospel graces manifold,
Communion blest impart.

Now of thy love we deem
As of an ocean vast,
Mounting in tides against the stream
Of ages gone and past.

Both theirs and ours Thou art,
As we and they are thine;
Kings, prophets, patriarchs—all have p
Along the sacred line.

By blood and water too*
God's mark is set on Thee,
That in Thee every faithful view
Both covenants might see.

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* [Jesus was baptized as well as circumcised.]

O bond of union, dear
And strong as is Thy grace!
Saints, parted by a thousand years,
May thus in heart embrace.

Is there a mourner true,
Who, fallen on faithless days,
Sighs for the heart-consoling view
Of those Heaven deign'd to praise?

In spirit may'st thou meet
With faithful Abraham here,
Whom soon in Eden thou shalt greet
A nursing father dear.

Would'st thou a poet be?
And would thy dull heart fain
Borrow of Israel's minstrelsy
One high enraptured strain?

Come here thy soul to tune,
Here set thy feeble chant,
Here, if at all beneath the moon,
Is holy David's haunt.

Art thou a child of tears,
Cradled in care and wo?
And seems it hard, thy vernal years
Few vernal joys can show?

And fall the sounds of mirth
Sad on thy lonely heart,
From all the hopes and charms of earth
Untimely called to part?

Look here, and hold thy peace:
The Giver of all good
Even from the womb takes no release
From suffering, tears and blood.

If thou would'st reap in love,
First sow in holy fear:
So life a winter's morn may prove
To a bright endless year.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

THE PILGRIM'S SONG.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. *Isaiah* xli. 17. [*First Morning Lesson.*]

[Almighty God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit, that, our hearts and our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

And wilt Thou hear the fever'd heart
To Thee in silence cry?
And as th' inconstant wildfires dart
Out of the restless eye,
Wilt Thou forgive the wayward thought,
By kindly woes yet half untaught
A Saviour's right, so dearly bought,
That hope should never die?

Thou wilt: for many a languid prayer
Has reach'd Thee from the wild,
Since the lorn mother, wandering there,
Cast down her fainting child;*

* Hagar. See Gen. xxi. 15.

Then stole apart to weep and die,
Nor knew an angel form was nigh,
To show soft waters gushing by,
And dewy shadows mild.

Thou wilt—for Thou art Israel's God,
And thine unwearied arm
Is ready yet with Moses' rod,
The hidden rill to charm
Out of the dry unfathom'd deep
Of sands, that lie in lifeless sleep,
Save when the scorching whirlwinds heap
Their waves in rude alarm.

These moments of wild wrath are thine—
Thine too the drearier hour,
When o'er th' horizon's silent line
Fond hopeless fancies cower,
And on the traveller's listless way
Rises and sets th' unchanging day,
No cloud in heaven to slake its ray,
On earth no sheltering bower.

Thou wilt be there, and not forsake,
To turn the bitter pool
Into a bright and breezy lake,
The throbbing brow to cool:
Till, left awhile with Thee alone,
The wilful heart be fain to own
That He, by whom our bright hours shone,
Our darkness best may rule.

The scent of water far away*
Upon the breeze is flung;
The desert pelican to-day
Securely leaves her young.

* ["Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through

Reproving thankless man, who fears
To journey on a few lone years,
Where on the sand thy step appears,
  Thy crown in sight is hung.

Thou, who didst sit on Jacob's well
  The weary hour of noon,*
The languid pulses Thou canst tell,
  The nerveless spirit tune.
Thou from whose cross in anguish burst
The cry that own'd thy dying thirst,†
To Thee we turn, our last and first,
  Our Sun and soothing Moon.

From darkness, here, and dreariness
  We ask not full repose;
Only be Thou at hand to bless
  Our trial hour of woes.
Is not the pilgrim's toil o'erpaid
By the clear rill and palmy shade?
And see we not, up earth's dark glade,
  The gate of heaven unclose?

---

the scent of water it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant." Job xiv. 8, 9. "The extraordinary scent of the camel enables him to discover water at a great distance; and thus in the wildest regions of the desert, the caravan is often preserved from destruction by this instinct."—"Having wandered about for a long time," says Burckhardt, speaking of a traveller in search of water, "he alighted under the shade of a tree and tied the camel to one of its branches; the beast, however, *smelt the water*, (as the Arabs express it,) and, wearied as it was, broke its halter, and sat off galloping furiously in the direction of the spring, which, as it afterwards appeared, was at half an hour's distance."—*Library of Entertaining Knowledge*, vol. i.]

* St. John iv. 6. † St. John xix. 28.

THE EPIPHANY.*

[JANUARY 6.]

And, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.—*St. Matt.* ii. 9, 10. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only begotten Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant that we, who know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*]

STAR of the east! how sweet art Thou,
Seen in life's early morning sky,
Ere yet a cloud has dimm'd the brow,
While yet we gaze with childish eye;

When father, mother, nursing friend,
Most dearly loved, and loving best,
First bid us from their arms ascend,
Pointing to Thee in thy sure rest.

Too soon the glare of earthly day
Buries to us thy brightness keen,
And we are left to find our way
By faith and hope in Thee unseen.

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* [The festival of the Epiphany, as its name imports, commemorates the *manifestation* of Christ to the Gentiles, as represented by the wise men, who in the eastern land in which they dwelt, having seen his star, had come to worship him.]

What matter? if the waymarks sure
On every side are round us set,
Soon overleap'd, but not obscure?
'Tis ours to mark them or forget.

What matter? if in calm old age
Our childhood's star again arise,
Crowning our lonely pilgrimage
With all that cheers a wanderer's eyes?

Ne'er may we lose it from our sight
Till all our hopes and thoughts are led
To where it stays its lucid flight
Over our Saviour's lowly bed.

There, swathed in humblest poverty,
On chastity's meek lap enshrined,
With breathless reverence waiting by,
When we our sovereign Master find,

Will not the long-forgotten glow
Of mingled joy and awe return,
When stars above or flowers below
First made our infant spirits burn?

Look on us, Lord, and take our parts
Even on thy throne of purity!
From these our proud yet grovelling hearts
Hide not thy mild forgiving eye.

Did not the Gentile Church find grace,
Our mother dear, this favour'd day?
With gold and myrrh she sought thy face,*
Nor didst Thou turn thy face away.

---

* [We come not with a costly store,
O Lord, like them of old,—
The masters of the starry lore,—
From Ophir's shore of gold:

She too,* in earlier, purer days,
  Had watch'd Thee gleaming faint and far—
But, wandering in self-chosen ways,
  She lost Thee quite, thou lovely star.

Yet had her Father's finger turn'd
  To Thee her first inquiring glance:
The deeper shame within her burn'd
  When waken'd from her wilful trance.

Behold, her wisest throng thy gate;
  Their richest, sweetest, purest store
(Yet own'd too worthless and too late)
  They lavish on Thy cottage-floor.

They give their best—O tenfold shame
  On us, their fallen progeny,
Who sacrifice the blind and lame†—
  Who will not wake‡ or fast with Thee!

No weepings of the incense tree
  Are with the gifts we bring,
No odorous myrrh of Araby
  Blends with our offering.
But still our love would bring its best,
  A spirit keenly tried
By fierce affliction's fiery test,
  And seven times purified:
The fragrant graces of the mind,
  The virtues that delight
To give their perfume out, will find
  Acceptance in thy sight.

Rev. William Croswell.]

* The Patriarchal Church. † Malachi i. 8.

‡ ["What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" *St. Matthew* xxvi. 40.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses.—*Isaiah* xliv. 4. [*First Morning Lesson.*]

[O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people who call upon thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Lessons sweet of spring returning,*
  Welcome to the thoughtful heart!
May I call ye sense or learning,
  Instinct pure, or heaven-taught art?
Be your title what it may,
Sweet and lengthening April day,
While with you the soul is free,
Ranging wild o'er hill and lea.

* ["When we write of the dawn of the year, of the new races of birds and of blossoms that are all around us *springing* into life, our utmost efforts can give but one enjoyment to the reader. But he who goes out to observe, has pleasure in every way that it can come, and *health along with it.* The beauty of the flowers and their fragrance, the elegant forms and varied tints of the birds, their bustling activity and sprightly conduct, and the music of their songs; the sportive gambols of the young animals, and the tender solicitude that is shown for them by the old, and all that is, and all that occurs in the earth, the waters and the air, is a constant creation,—a daily, nay, an hourly springing up of new worlds: and he who lives one spring in the open air, may watch the whole progress of a hundred

Soft as Memnon's harp at morning,
To the inward ear devout,
Touch'd by light, with heavenly warning
Your transporting chords ring out.
Every leaf in every nook,
Every wave in every brook,
Chanting with a solemn voice,
Minds us of our better choice.

Needs no show of mountain hoary,
Winding shore or deepening glen,
Where the landscape in its glory
Teaches truth to wandering men:
Give true hearts but earth and sky,
And some flowers to bloom and die,—*
Homely scenes and simple views
Lowly thoughts may best infuse.

---

generations. Nature is then 'voice all over,' and whether she speaks to one of the senses, or to them all, she always speaks instruction." *Mudie's British Naturalist.*]

*["Come quietly away with me, and we will walk up and down the narrow path, by the sweet-brier hedge; and we will listen to the low song of the blackbird, and the fresh air will cool our aching brows, and we shall find comfort. To these things, fresh air, and the bird's song, and the frágrance of the lowly flowers, God has given a blessing; like sleep, they are his medicines,—'balm of sweet minds!' We will walk to and fro under the shade of these elms, and we will be calm; bitter recollections shall be made sweet by the thought of his mercies; and in the midst of the sorrows we have in our hearts, his comforts shall refresh our souls; and our minds shall be stored with many thoughts, sweet, like the perfume of these flowers"—*Scenes in our Parish.*

See the soft green willow springing
  Where the waters gently pass,
Every way her free arms flinging
  O'er the moss and reedy grass.
Long ere winter blasts are fled,
See her tipp'd with vernal red,
And her kindly flower display'd
Ere her leaf can cast a shade.

Though the rudest hand assail her,
  Patiently she droops awhile,
But when showers and breezes hail her,
  Wears again her willing smile.
Thus I learn contentment's power
From the slighted willow bower,
Ready to give thanks and live
On the least that Heaven may give.

If, the quiet brooklet leaving,
  Up the stony vale I wind,
Haply half in fancy grieving
  For the shades I leave behind,
By the dusty wayside drear,
Nightingales with joyous cheer
Sing, my sadness to reprove,
Gladlier than in cultured grove.

Where the thickest boughs are twining
  Of the greenest, darkest tree,
There they plunge, the light declining—
  All may hear, but none may see.
Fearless of the passing hoof,
Hardly will they fleet aloof;
So they live in modest ways,
Trust entire, and ceaseless praise.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE SECRET OF PERPETUAL YOUTH.

Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.—*St. John* ii. 10. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and everlasting God, who dost govern al things in heaven and earth; mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and grant us thy peace al the days of our life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

THE heart of childhood is all mirth:
We frolic to and fro
As free and blithe, as if on earth
Were no such thing as wo.

But if indeed with reckless faith
We trust the flattering voice
Which whispers, "Take thy fill ere death;
Indulge thee and rejoice—"

Too surely, every setting day,
Some lost delight we mourn,
The flowers all die along our way,
Till we, too, die forlorn.

Such is the world's gay garish feast,
In her first charming bowl
Infusing all that fires the breast,
And cheats th' unstable soul.

And still, as loud the revel swells,
The fever'd pulse beats higher,
Till the scar'd taste from foulest wells
Is fain to slake its fire.

Unlike the feast of heavenly love
  Spread at the Saviour's word
For souls that hear his call, and prove
  Meet for his bridal board.

Why should we fear youth's draught of joy,
  If pure, would sparkle less?
Why should the cup the sooner cloy,
  Which God hath deign'd to bless?

For, is it hope, that thrills so keen
  Along each bounding vein,
Still whispering glorious things unseen?—
  Faith makes the vision plain.

The world would kill her soon: but Faith
  Her daring dreams will cherish,
Speeding her gaze o'er time and death
  To realms where naught can perish.

Or is it love, the dear delight
  Of hearts that know no guile,
That all around see all things bright
  With their own magic smile?

The silent joy, that sinks so deep,
  Of confidence and rest,
Lull'd in a father's arms to sleep,
  Clasp'd to a mother's breast?

Who, but a Christian, through all life
  That blessing may prolong?
Who, through the world's sad day of strife
  Still chant his morning song?

Fathers may hate us or forsake,
  God's foundlings then are we

Mother on child no pity take,*
But we shall still have Thee.

We may look home, and seek in vain
A fond fraternal heart,
But Christ hath given his promise plain
To do a brother's part.

Nor shall dull age, as worldlings say,
The heavenward flame annoy:
The Saviour cannot pass away,
And with him lives our joy.

Ever the richest, tenderest glow
Sets round th' autumnal sun—
But there sight fails; no heart may know
The bliss when life is done.

Such is thy banquet, dearest Lord;
O give us grace, to cast
Our lot with thine, to trust thy word,
And keep our best till last.

---

* Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. *Isaiah* xlix. 15.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE GOOD CENTURION.

When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel. *St. Matthew* viii. 10. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

I MARK'D a rainbow in the north,
What time the wild autumnal sun
From his dark veil at noon look'd forth,
As glorying in his course half done,
Flinging soft radiance far and wide
Over the dusky heaven and bleak hill-side.

It was a gleam to memory dear,
And as I walk and muse apart,
When all seems faithless round and drear
I would revive it in my heart,
And watch how light can find its way
To regions farthest from the fount of day

Light flashes in the gloomiest sky
And music in the dullest plain,
For there the lark is soaring high
Over her flat and leafless reign,
And chanting in so blithe a tone,
t shames the weary heart to feel itself alone.

Brighter than rainbow in the north,
More cheery than the matin lark,

Is the soft gleam of Christian worth,
  Which on some holy house we mark,
Dear to the pastor's aching heart
To think, where'er he looks, such gleam may
  have a part;

May dwell, unseen by all but Heaven,
  Like diamond blazing in the mine;
For ever, where such grace is given,
  It fears in open day to shine,*
Lest the deep stain it owns within
Break out, and faith be shamed by the believer's
  sin.

In silence and afar they wait,
  To find a prayer their Lord may hear:
Voice of the poor and desolate,
  You best may bring it to his ear.
Your grateful intercessions rise
With more than royal pomp, and pierce the skies.

Happy the soul, whose precious cause
  You in the sovereign presence plead—

---

* Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof.

"From the first time that the impressions of religion settled deeply in his mind, he used great caution to conceal it; not only in obedience to the rule given by our Saviour, of fasting, praying, and giving alms in secret, but from a particular distrust he had of himself; for he said he was afraid he should at some time or other do some enormous thing, which, if he were looked on as a very religious man, might cast a reproach on the profession of it, and give great advantages to impious men to blaspheme the name of God."—*Burnet's Life of Hale, in Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog.* vi. 73.

"This is the lover of thy laws,*
"The friend of thine in fear and need,"—
For to the poor thy mercy lends
That solemn style, "thy nation and thy friends."

He too is blest, whose outward eye
The graceful lines of art may trace,
While his free spirit, soaring high,
Discerns the glorious from the base;
Till out of dust his magic raise†
A home for prayer and love, and full harmonious praise,

Where far away and high above,
In maze on maze the tranced sight
Strays, mindful of that heavenly love
Which knows no end in depth or height,
While the strong breath of music seems
To waft us ever on, soaring in blissful dreams.‡

What though in poor and humble guise
Thou here didst sojourn, cottage-born?
Yet from thy glory in the skies
Our earthly gold Thou dost not scorn.
For love delights to bring her best,
And where love is, that offering evermore is blest.

Love on the Saviour's dying head
Her spikenard drops unblamed may pour,

---

* He loveth our nation.

† He hath built us a synagogue.

‡ [In this and the former stanza allusion is made to William of Wykeham, and Winchester cathedral. The Gothic architecture and cathedral music are beautifully hinted at.]

May mount his cross, and wrap him, dead,
In spices from the golden shore :*
Risen, may embalm his sacred name
With all a painter's art, and all a minstrel's flame.

Worthless and lost our offerings seem,
Drops in the ocean of his praise;
But mercy with her genial beam
Is ripening them to pearly blaze
To sparkle in His crown above,
Who welcomes here a child's as there an angel love.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE WORLD IS FOR EXCITEMENT, THE GOSPEL FOR SOOTHING.

When they saw him, they besought him to depart out of their coasts. *St. Matthew* viii. 34. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

They know th' Almighty's power,
Who, waken'd by the rushing midnight shower,
Watch for the fitful breeze
To howl and chafe amid the bending trees—

* St. John xii 7; xix. 30.

Watch for the still white gleam
To bathe the landscape in a fiery stream,
Touching the tremulous eye with sense of light
Too rapid and too pure for all but angel sight.

They know th' Almighty's love,
Who, when the whirlwinds rock the topmost grove,
Stand in the shade, and hear
The tumult with a deep exulting fear,
How in their fiercest sway,
Curb'd by some power unseen, they die away,
Like a bold steed that owns his rider's arm,
Proud to be check'd and soothed by that o'er-mastering charm.

But there are storms within
That heave the struggling heart with wilder din;
And there are power and love
The maniac's rushing frenzy to reprove;
And when he takes his seat,
Clothed and in calmness, at his Saviour's feet,*
Is not the power as strange, the love as blest,
As when He said, be still, and ocean sank to rest?

Wo to the wayward heart
That gladlier turns to eye the shuddering start
Of passion in her might,
Than marks the silent growth of grace and light;
Pleased in the cheerless tomb
To linger, while the morning rays illume
Green lake, and cedar tuft. and spicy glade,
Shaking their dewy tresses now the storm is laid.

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* St. Mark v. 15; iv. 39

The storm is laid—and now
In his meek power He climbs the mountain's brow,
Who bade the waves go sleep,
And lash'd the vex'd fiends to their yawning deep.
How on a rock they stand,
Who watch his eye, and hold his guiding hand!
Not half so fix'd, amid her vassal hills,
Rises the holy pile that Kedron's valley fills.

And wilt thou seek again
Thy howling waste, thy charnel-house and chain,
And with the demons be,
Rather than clasp thine own Deliverer's knee?
Sure 'tis no heaven-bred awe
That bids thee from his healing touch withdraw:
The world and He are struggling in thine heart,
And in thy reckless mood thou bidd'st thy Lord depart.

He, merciful and mild,
As erst, beholding, loves his wayward child;
When souls of highest birth
Waste their impassion'd might on dreams of earth,
He opens nature's book,
And on his glorious gospel bids them look,
Till by such chords as rule the choirs above,
Their lawless cries are turn'd to hymns of perfect love.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

CURE SIN AND YOU CURE SORROW.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God. *Isaiah* lix. 1, 2. [*First Morning Lesson for the Day, Church of England Service.*]

O Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy Church and Household continually in thy true religion, that they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace, may evermore be defended by thy mighty power through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

"Awake, arm divine! awake,
Eye of the only Wise!
Now for thy glory's sake,
Saviour and God, arise:
And may thine ear, that sealed seems,
In pity mark our mournful themes!"

Thus in her lonely hour
Thy Church is fain to cry,
As if thy love and power
Were vanish'd from her sky;
Yet God is there, and at his side
He triumphs, who for sinners died.

Ah, 'tis the world enthralls
The heaven-betrothed breast;
The traitor sense recalls
The soaring soul from rest.
That bitter sigh was all for earth,
For glories gone and vanish'd mirth.

Age would to youth return,
Farther from heaven would be,

To feel the wild fire burn,
On idolizing knee
Again to fall, and rob thy shrine
Of hearts, the right of love divine.

Lord of this erring flock!
Thou whose soft showers distil
On ocean waste or rock,
Free as on Hermon hill—
Do Thou our craven spirits cheer,
And shame away the selfish tear.

'Twas silent all and dead*
Beside the barren sea,
Where Philip's steps were led,
Led by a voice from thee—
He rose and went, nor ask'd Thee why,
Nor stay'd to heave one faithless sigh.

Upon his lonely way
The high-born traveller came,
Reading a mournful lay
Of "One who bore our shame;†
Silent himself, his name untold,
And yet his glories were of old."

To muse what Heaven might mean,
His wondering brow he raised,
And met an eye serene
That on him watchful gazed.
No hermit o'er so welcome cross'd
A child's lone path, in woodland lost.

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* See Acts viii. 26—40. ["Arise and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, *which is desert.*" A fine specimen of Keble's intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures, in their most minute details.]

† Isaiah liii. 6—8.

Now wonder turns to love;
The scrolls of sacred lore
No darksome mazes prove;
The desert tires no more:
They bathe where holy waters flow,*
Then on their way rejoicing go.†

They part to meet in heaven;
But of the joy they share,
Absolving and forgiven,
The sweet remembrance bear.
Yes—mark him well, ye cold and proud,
Bewildered in a heartless crowd,

Starting and turning pale
At rumour's angry din—
No storm can now assail
The charm he wears within;
Rejoicing still and doing good,
And with the thought of God imbued.

No glare of high estate,
No gloom of wo or want,
The radiance can abate
Where Heaven delights to haunt;
Sin only hides the genial ray,
And, round the Cross, makes night of day.

Then weep it from thy heart;
So may'st thou duly learn
The intercessor's part:
Thy prayers and tears may earn
For fallen souls some healing breath,
Ere they have died th' apostate's death.

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* ["See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"]

† ["And he went on his way rejoicing"]

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE BENEFITS OF UNCERTAINTY.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as he is 1 *St. John* iii. 2. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[O God, whose blessed Son was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God and heirs of eternal life; grant us, we beseech thee, that having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as he is pure, that when he shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where, with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end *Amen.*]

THERE are who, darkling and alone,
Would wish the weary night were gone,
Though dawning morn should only show
The secret of their unknown wo;
Who pray for sharpest throbs of pain
To ease them of doubt's galling chain:
"Only disperse the cloud," they cry,
"And if our fate be death, give light and let us die."*

Unwise I deem them, LORD, unmeet
To profit by thy chastenings sweet;
For thou would'st have us linger still
Upon the verge of good or ill,

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* Ἐν δε φαει και ολεσσον. The prayer of Ajax—Light though I perish." *Homer.*

That on thy guiding hand unseen
Our undivided hearts may lean,
And this our frail and foundering bark
Glide in the narrow wake of thy beloved ark

'Tis so in war—the champion true
Loves victory more, when dim in view
He sees her glories gild afar
The dusky edge of stubborn war,
Than if th' untrodden bloodless field
The harvest of her laurels yield;
Let not my bark in calm abide,
But win her fearless way against the chafing tide.

'Tis so in love—the faithful heart
From her dim vision would not part,
When first to her fond gaze is given
That purest spot in fancy's heaven,
For all the gorgeous sky beside,
Though pledged her own and sure t' abide;
Dearer than every past noon-day
That twilight gleam to her, though faint and far away.*

So have I seen some tender flower
Prized above all the vernal bower,
Shelter'd beneath the coolest shade,
Embosom'd in the greenest glade,
So frail a gem, it scarce may bear
The playful touch of evening air;
When hardier grown, we love it less,†
And trust it from our sight, not needing our caress.

* [Heu, quanto minus tui meminisse quam reliquis versari. *Shenstone's Epitaph on Miss Dolman.*]

† ["The bird that we nurse is the bird that we love."]

And wherefore is the sweet springtide
Worth all the changeful year beside?
The last-born babe, why lies its part
Deep in the mother's inmost heart?
But that the LORD and source of love
Would have his weakest ever prove
Our tenderest care—and most of all
Our frail immortal souls, His work and Satan's thrall.

So be it, LORD; I know it best,
Though not as yet this wayward breast
Beat quite in answer to thy voice,
Yet surely I have made my choice;
I know not yet the promised bliss,
Know not if I shall win or miss;
So doubting, rather let me die,
Than close with aught beside, to last eternally.

What is the heaven we idly dream?
The self-deceiver's dreary theme,
A cloudless sun that softly shines,
Bright maidens and unfailing vines,
The warrior's pride, the hunter's mirth,
Poor fragments all of this low earth;
Such as in sleep would hardly soothe
A soul that once had tasted of immortal truth.

What is the heaven our GOD bestows?
No prophet yet, no angel knows;
Was never yet created eye
Could see across eternity;
Not seraph's wing for ever soaring
Can pass the flight of souls adoring,
That nearer still and nearer grow
To th' unapproached LORD, once made for them so low.

Unseen, unfelt their earthly growth,
And self-accused of sin and sloth
They live and die: their names decay,
Their fragrance passes quite away;
Like violets in the freezing blast,
No vernal steam around they cast,—
But they shall flourish from the tomb,
The breath of GOD shall wake them into odorous bloom.

Then on th' incarnate SAVIOUR's breast,
The fount of sweetness, they shall rest,
Their spirits every hour imbued
More deeply with his precious blood.
But peace—still voice and closed eye
Suit best with hearts beyond the sky,
Hearts training in their low abode,
Daily to lose themselves in hope to find their GOD.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.*

The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made.—*Romans* i. 20.

[O Lord, we beseech thee favourably to hear the prayers of thy people, that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness, for the glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end *Amen.*]

* [The three Sundays next preceding Lent are called, respectively, *Septuagesima*, *Sexagesima* and *Quinquagesima* Sundays, because nearly *seventy*, *sixty*,

THERE is a book, who runs may read,
Which heavenly truth imparts,
And all the lore its scholars need,
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The works of God above, below,
Within us and around,
Are pages in that book, to show
How God himself is found.

The glorious sky embracing all
Is like the Maker's love,
Wherewith encompass'd, great and small
In peace and order move.

The moon above, the Church below,
A wondrous race they run,
But all their radiance, all their glow,
Each borrows of its Sun.

The Saviour lends the light and heat
That crowns his holy hill;
The saints, like stars, around his seat,
Perform their courses still.*

The saints above are stars in heaven—
What are the saints on earth?
Like trees they stand whom God has given,†
Our Eden's happy birth.

Faith is their fix'd unswerving root,
Hope their unfading flower,
Fair deeds of charity their fruit,
The glory of their bower.

---

and *fifty* days before Easter. The services appointed for them are designed as a preparation for the due observance of the Lenten fast.]

* Daniel xii. 3. † Isaiah lx. 21.

The dew of heaven is like thy grace,*
It steals in silence down;
But where it lights, the favour'd place
By richest fruits is known.

One name above all glorious names
With its ten thousand tongues
The everlasting sea proclaims,
Echoing angelic songs.

The raging fire,† the roaring wind,
Thy boundless power display:
But in the gentler breeze we find
The Spirit's viewless way.‡

Two worlds are ours: 'tis only sin
Forbids us to descry
The mystic heaven and earth within,
Plain as the sea and sky.

Thou, who hast given me eyes to see
And love this sight so fair,
Give me a heart to find out Thee,
And read Thee every where.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

So he drove out the man, and placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.—*Gen.* iii. 24. Compare ch. vi. [*First Lessons in the Morning and Evening Service of the Church of England.*]

* Ps. lxviii. 9. † Heb. xii. 29. ‡ St. John iii. 8.

[O Lord God, who seest that we put not our trust in any thing that we do, mercifully grant that by thy power we may be defended against all adversity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Foe of mankind! too bold thy race:
Thou runn'st at such a reckless pace,
Thine own dire work thou surely wilt confound:
'Twas but one little drop of sin
We saw this morning enter in,
And, lo! at eventide the world is drown'd.*

See here the fruit of wandering eyes,
Of worldly longings to be wise,
Of passion dwelling on forbidden sweets:
Ye lawless glances, freely rove;
Ruin below and wrath above
Are all that now the wildering fancy meets.

Lord, when in some deep garden glade,
Of Thee and of myself afraid,
From thoughts like these among the bowers I hide,
Nearest and loudest then of all
I seem to hear the Judge's call:—
"Where art thou, fallen man? come forth, and be thou tried."

Trembling before Thee as I stand,
Where'er I gaze on either hand
The sentence is gone forth, the ground is cursed:
Yet mingled with the penal shower
Some drops of balm in every bower
Steal down like April dews, that softest fall and first.

* In the order of lessons for Sexagesima Sunday in the Church of England, that from the Old Testament for the morning relates the *fall*, and that for the evening, the *flood*.]

If filial and maternal love*
Memorial of our guilt must prove,
If sinful babes in sorrow must be born;
Yet, to assuage her sharpest throes,
The faithful mother surely knows,
This was the way Thou camest to save the world forlorn.†

If blessed wedlock may not bless‡
Without some tinge of bitterness
To dash her cup of joy, since Eden lost;
Chaining to earth with strong desire
Hearts that would highest else aspire
And o'er the tenderer sex usurping ever most;

Yet by the light of Christian lore
'Tis blind idolatry no more,
But a sweet help and pattern of true love,
Showing how best the soul may cling
To her immortal Spouse and King,
How He should rule, and she with full desire approve.

If niggard earth her treasures hide,§
To all but labouring hands denied,
Lavish of thorns and worthless weeds alone
The doom is half in mercy given
To train us in our way to heaven,
And show our lagging souls how glory must be won.

---

* In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children.

† [Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child bearing. 1 *Tim.* ii. 15.]

‡ Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

§ Cursed is the ground for thy sake.

If on the sinner's outward frame*
God hath impress'd his mark of blame,
And even our bodies shrink at touch of light,
Yet mercy hath not left us bare:
The very weeds we daily wear†
Are to faith's eye a pledge of God's forgiving might.

And oh! if yet one arrow more,‡
The sharpest of th' Almighty's store,
Tremble upon the string—a sinner's death—
Art Thou not by to soothe and save,
To lay us gently in the grave,
To close the weary eye and hush the parting breath?

Therefore in sight of man bereft
The happy garden still was left;
The fiery sword that guarded, show'd it too,
Turning all ways, the world to teach,
That though as yet beyond our reach,
Still in its place the tree of life and glory grew

---

* I was afraid, because I was naked.

† The Lord God made coats of skins, and he clothed them.

‡ Thou shalt surely die.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. *Gen.* ix. 13. [*First Morning Lesson for the Day, Church of England.*]

[O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which, whoever liveth is counted dead before thee: grant this for thine only Son, Jesus Christ's sake *Amen.*]

Sweet dove! the softest, steadiest plume
In all the sunbright sky,
Brightening in ever-changeful bloom
As breezes change on high;

Sweet leaf! the pledge of peace and mirth,
"Long sought, and lately won,"
Bless'd increase of reviving earth,
When first it felt the sun;

Sweet rainbow! pride of summer days,
High set at Heaven's command,
Though into drear and dusky haze
Thou melt on either hand;—

Dear tokens of a pardoning God,
We hail ye, one and all,
As when our fathers walk'd abroad,*
Freed from their twelvemonths' thrall.

* ["When o'er the green undeluged earth
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's gray fathers forth,
To watch thy sacred sign'

How joyful from th' imprisoning ark
On the green earth they spring!
Not blither, after showers, the lark
Mounts up with glistening wing.

So home-bound sailors spring to shore,
Two oceans safely pass'd;
So happy souls, when life is o'er,
Plunge in th' empyreal vast.

What wins their first and fondest gaze
In all the blissful field,
And keeps it through a thousand days?
Love face to face reveal'd;

Love imaged in that cordial look
Our Lord in Eden bends
On souls that sin and earth forsook
In time to die His friends.

And what most welcome and serene
Dawns on the patriarch's eye,
In all th' emerging hills so green,
In all the brightening sky?

What but the gentle rainbow's gleam,
Soothing the wearied sight,
That cannot bear the solar beam,
With soft undazzling light?

Lord, if our fathers turn'd to thee
With such adoring gaze,
Wondering frail man thy light should see
Without thy scorching blaze;

And when its yellow lustre smiled
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child,
To bless the bow of God."

Campbell.]

Where is our love, and where our hearts,
We who have seen thy Son,
Have tried thy Spirit's winning arts—
And yet we are not won?

The Son of God in radiance beam'd
Too bright for us to scan,
But we may face the rays that stream'd
From the mild Son of man.

There, parted into rainbow hues,
In sweet harmonious strife,
We see celestial love diffuse
Its light o'er Jesus' life.

God, by His bow, vouchsafes to write
This truth in heaven above;
As every lovely hue is light,
So every grace is love.*

---

*[The lines below are not unworthy to be set in Keble's coronet.

DE PROFUNDIS.

"There may be a cloud without a rainbow, but there cannot be a rainbow without a cloud."

My soul were dark
But for the golden light and rainbow hue
That, sweeping heaven with their triumphal arc,
Break on the view

Enough to feel
That God indeed is good! enough to know
Without the gloomy clouds he could reveal
No beauteous bow.

Rev. William Croswell.]

ASH-WEDNESDAY.*

When thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret. *St. Matthew* vi. 17. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and overlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

"Yes—deep within and deeper yet
The rankling shaft of conscience hide;
Quick let the swelling eye forget
The tears that in the heart abide;
Calm be the voice, the aspect bold,
No shuddering pass o'er lip or brow,
For why should innocence be told
The pangs that guilty spirits bow?"

"The loving eye that watches thine
Close as the air that wraps thee round—

---

* [Ash-Wednesday (so called from the custom in the primitive church, of sprinkling ashes on that day on the heads of notorious offenders, who were then excommunicated) is the first day of Lent. The season of Lent embraces forty days, Sundays not being counted, which the church invites her members to observe with special seriousness and self-denial, as preparatory to the due commemoration of the mournful event of the crucifixion, which is celebrated on Good-Friday. The number of days is fixed in especial reference to the forty days' fasting of our Lord, just before his temptation.

Why in thy sorrow should it pine,
  Since never of thy sin it found?
And wherefore should the heathen see*
  What chains of darkness thee enslave,
And mocking say, Lo, this is he
  Who own'd a God that could not save?"

Thus oft the mourner's wayward heart
  Tempts him to hide his grief and die,
Too feeble for confession's smart,
  Too proud to bear a pitying eye;
How sweet, in that dark hour, to fall
  On bosoms waiting to receive
Our sighs, and gently whisper all!
  They love us—will not God forgive?

Else let us keep our fast within,
  Till Heaven and we are quite alone,
Then let the grief, the shame, the sin,
  Before the mercy-seat be thrown.
Between the porch and altar weep
  Unworthy of the holiest place,
Yet hoping near the shrine to keep
  One lowly cell in sight of grace.

Nor fear lest sympathy should fail—
  Hast thou not seen, in night-hours drear,
When racking thoughts the heart assail,
  Then glimmering stars by turns appear,
And from th' eternal home above
  With silent news of mercy steal?
So angels pause on tasks of love,
  To look where sorrowing sinners kneel.

Or, if no angel pass that way,
  He who in secret sees, perchance

* Wherefore should they say among the people Where is their God? *Joel* ii. 17.

May bid his own heart-warming ray
  Toward thee stream with kindlier glance,
As when upon His drooping head
  His Father's light was pour'd from heaven,
What time, unshelter'd and unfed,*
  Far in the wild His steps were driven.

High thoughts were with Him in that hour,
  Untold, unspeakable on earth—
And who can stay the soaring power
  Of spirits wean'd from worldly mirth,
While far beyond the sound of praise
  With upward eye they float serene,
And learn to bear their Saviour's blaze
  When judgment shall undraw the screen?

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE CITY OF REFUGE.

Haste thee, escape thither, for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither; therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.—*Genesis* xix. 22. [*First Morning Lesson for the Day, Church of England.*]

[O Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights, give us grace to use such abstinence, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

"Angel of wrath! why linger in mid air,
  While the devoted city's cry

* St. Matt. iv. 1.

Louder and louder swells? and canst thou spare,
Thy full-charged vial standing by?"
Thus, with stern voice, unsparing justice pleads:
He hears her not—with soften'd gaze
His eye is following where sweet Mercy leads,
And till she give the sign, his fury stays.

Guided by her, along the mountain road
Far through the twilight of the morn,
With hurrying footsteps from th' accursed abode
He sees the holy household borne:
Angels, or more, on either hand are nigh,*
To speed them o'er the tempting plain,
Lingering in heart, and with frail sidelong eye
Seeking how near they may unharm'd remain.

"Ah! wherefore gleam those upland slopes so fair?
And why, through every woodland arch,
Swells yon bright vale, as Eden rich and rare,
Where Jordan winds his stately march;
If all must be forsaken, ruin'd all,—
If God have planted but to burn?—
Surely not yet th' avenging shower will fall,
Though to my home for one last look I turn."

Thus while they waver, surely long ago
They had provoked the withering blast,
But that the merciful avengers know
Their frailty well, and hold them fast.
"Haste, for thy life escape, nor look behind"—
Ever in thrilling sounds like these
They check the wandering eye, severely kind,
Nor let the sinner lose his soul at ease.

---

* [The family of Lot, led out of Sodom. The expression, "angels, *or more*" (angels, or greater than they), has reference, probably, to the "angel of the covenant," spoken of in the Old Testament, and generally understood as a manifestation of the Son of God.

And when, o'erwearied with the steep ascent,
We for a nearer refuge crave,
One little spot of ground in mercy lent,
One hour of home before the grave,
Oft in his pity o'er his children weak,
His hand withdraws the penal fire,
And where we fondly cling, forbears to wreak
Full vengeance, till our hearts are wean'd entire.

Thus, by the merits of one righteous man,
The Church, our Zoar, shall abide;
Till she abuse, so sore, her lengthen'd span,
Even Mercy's self her face must hide.
Then, onward yet a step, thou hard-won soul;
Though in the Church thou know thy place,
The mountain farther lies—there seek thy goal,
There breathe at large, o'erpast thy dangerous race.

Sweet is the smile of home, the mutual look
When hearts are of each other sure;
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,
The haunt of all affections pure;
Yet in the world even these abide, and we
Above the world our calling boast:
Once gain the mountain top, and thou art free:
Till then, who rest, presume; who turn to look, are lost.*

* Escape for thy life: look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. . . . . But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. *Genesis* xix. 17, 26

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

ESAU'S FORFEIT.

And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. *Gen.* xxvii. 34. (Compare *Hebrews* xii. 17. He found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.)*—*First Morning Lesson for the Day, Church of England.*]

[Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

"And is there in God's world so drear a place
Where the loud bitter cry is raised in vain?
Where tears of penance come too late for grace,
As on th' uprooted flower the genial rain?

'Tis even so: the sovereign Lord of souls
Stores in the dungeon of his boundless realm
Each bolt, that o'er the sinner vainly rolls,
With gather'd wrath the reprobate to whelm.

---

* The author earnestly hopes that nothing in these stanzas will be understood to express any opinion as to the general efficacy of what is called "a death-bed repentance." Such questions are best left in the merciful obscurity with which Scripture has enveloped them. Esau's probation, as far as his birthright was concerned, was quite over when he uttered the cry in the text. His despondency, therefore, is not parallel to any thing on this side the grave.

Will the storm hear the sailor's piteous cry,*
  Taught to mistrust, too late, the tempting wave,
When all around he sees but sea and sky,
  A God in anger, a self-chosen grave?

Or will the thorns, that strew intemperance' bed,†
  Turn with a wish to down? will late remorse
Recall the shaft the murderer's hand has sped,
  Or from the guiltless bosom turns its course?

Then may th' unbodied soul in safety fleet
  Through the dark curtains of the world above,
Fresh from the stain of crime; nor fear to meet
  The God, whom here she would not learn to love:

Then is there hope for such as die unblest,
  That angel wings may waft them to the shore,
Nor need th' unready virgin strike her breast,
  Nor wait desponding round the bridegroom's door.

But where is then the stay of contrite hearts?
  Of old they lean'd on thy eternal word,
But with the sinner's fear their hope departs,
  Fast link'd as thy great name to Thee, O Lord:

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* Compare Bishop Butler's Analogy, p. 54—64, ed. 1736.

† ["Consider, then, people ruin their fortunes by extravagance; they bring diseases upon themselves by excess; they incur the penalties of civil laws: will sorrow for these follies past, and behaving well for the future, alone and of itself, prevent the natural consequences of them?"—*Butler's Analogy*, part ii. c. v. sec. 4.]

That name, by which thy faithful oath is pass'd
That we should endless be, for joy or wo :—
And if the treasures of thy wrath could waste,
Thy lovers must their promised heaven forego.

But ask of elder days, earth's vernal hour,
When in familiar talk God's voice was heard,
When at the patriarch's call the fiery shower
Propitious o'er the turf-built shrine appear'd.

Watch by our father Isaac's pastoral door—
The birthright sold, the blessing lost and won,
Tell, Heaven has wrath that can relent no more,
The grave dark deeds that cannot be undone.

We barter life for pottage ; sell true bliss
For wealth or power, for pleasure or renown ;
Thus, Esau-like, our Father's blessing miss,
Then wash with fruitless tears our faded crown.

Our faded crown, despised and flung aside,
Shall on some brother's brow immortal bloom :
No partial hand the blessing may misguide ;
No flattering fancy change our Monarch's doom;

His righteous doom, that meek true-hearted love
The everlasting birthright should receive,
The softest dews drop on her from above,*
The richest green her mountain garland weave ;

Her brethren, mightiest, wisest, eldest born,
Bow to her sway, and move at her behest :
Isaac's fond blessing may not fall on scorn,
Nor Balaam's curse on love, which God hath blest.

* Genesis xxvii. 27, 28.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE SPOILS OF SATAN.

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoil. *St. Luke* xi. 21, 22. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[We beseech thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

See Lucifer like lightning fall,
Dash'd from his throne of pride;
While, answering Thy victorious call,
The saints his spoils divide,
This world of thine, by him usurp'd too long,
Now opening all her stores to heal thy servants' wrong.

So when the first-born of thy foes
Dead in the darkness lay,
When thy redeem'd at midnight rose
And cast their bonds away,
The orphan'd realm threw wide her gates, and told
Into freed Israel's lap her jewels and her gold.

And when their wondrous march was o'er,
And they had won their homes,
Where Abraham fed his flock of yore,
Among their father' tombs;—
A land that drinks the rain of heaven at will
Whose waters kiss the feet of many a vine-clad hill:—

Oft as they watch'd, at thoughtful eve,
A gale from bowers of balm
Sweep o'er the billowy corn, and heave
The tresses of the palm,
Just as the lingering sun had touch'd with gold,
Far o'er the cedar shade, some tower of giants old;

It was a fearful joy, I ween,
To trace the heathen's toil,
The limpid wells, the orchards green
Left ready for the spoil;
The household stores untouch'd, the roses bright
Wreathed o'er the cottage walls in garlands of delight.*

And now another Canaan yields
To thine all-conquering ark;—
Fly from the "old poetic" fields,†
Ye Paynim shadows dark!
Immortal Greece, dear land of glorious lays,
Lo! here the "unknown God" of thy unconscious praise!‡

The olive wreath, the ivied wand,
"The sword in myrtles dress'd,"§

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* [A most lovely picture of the natural and domestic beauties of the land upon which, as in Eden, sin had brought down the curse. It is here most skilfully introduced to heighten the contrast.]

† Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around. *Gray.*

‡ [As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. *Acts* xvii. 23.]

§ The famous Athenian drinking song, by Callistratus:—

Each legend of the shadowy strand
Now wakes a vision bless'd;
As little children lisp, and tell of heaven,
So thoughts beyond their thought to those high bards were given.

And these are ours; Thy partial grace
The tempting treasure lends;
These relics of a guilty race
Are forfeit to thy friends;
What seem'd an idol hymn, now breathes of Thee,
Tuned by faith's ear to some celestial melody.

There's not a strain to memory dear*
Nor flower in classic grove,
There's not a sweet note warbled here,
But minds us of thy love.
O Lord, our Lord, and spoiler of our foes,
There is no light but thine; with Thee all beauty glows.

I'll wreathe my sword with myrtle as the brave Harmodius did,
And as Aristogeiton his avenging weapon hid,
When they slew the haughty tyrant, and regain'd our liberty,
And breaking down oppression, made the men of Athens free. G. W. D.

* See Burns' Works, i. 293, Dr. Currie's edition.
[There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw or green.
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.]

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE ROSE-BUD.

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother; and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. *Gen.* xliii. 30. [*First Lesson, Morning Service, Church of England.*]

There stood no man with them, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. *Gen.* xlv. 1. [*First Lesson, Evening Service, Church of England.*]

[Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*]

When Nature tries her finest touch,
Weaving her vernal wreath,
Mark ye, how close she veils her round,
Not to be traced by sight or sound,
Nor soiled by ruder breath?

Who ever saw the earliest rose
First open her sweet breast?
Or, when the summer sun goes down,
The first soft star in evening's crown
Light up her gleaming crest?

Fondly we seek the dawning bloom
On features wan and fair,—
The gazing eye no change can trace,
But look away a little space,
Then turn, and, lo! 'tis there.

But there's a sweeter flower than e'er
Blush'd on the rosy spray—
A brighter star, a richer bloom
Than e'er did western heaven illume
At close of summer day.

'Tis love, the last best gift of Heaven;
Love gentle, holy, pure;
But, tenderer than a dove's soft eye,
The searching sun, the open sky
She never could endure.

Even human love will shrink from sight
Here in the coarse rude earth;
How then should rash intruding glance
Break in upon her sacred trance
Who boasts a heavenly birth?

So still and secret is her growth,
Ever the truest heart,
Where deepest strikes her kindly root
For hope or joy, for flower or fruit
Least knows its happy part.

God only, and good angels, look
Behind the blissful screen—
As when, triumphant o'er his woes,
The Son of God by moonlight rose,*
By all but Heaven unseen;

As when the holy maid beheld
Her risen Son and Lord;
Thought has not colours half so fair
That she to paint that hour may dare,
In silence best adored.

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* [It was at the time of the Paschal full moon that the Saviour rose from the dead.]

The gracious dove, that brought from heaven
The earnest of our bliss,
Of many a chosen witness telling,
On many a happy vision dwelling,
Sings not a note of this.

So, truest image of the Christ,
Old Israel's long-lost son,
What time, with sweet forgiving cheer,
He called his conscious brethren near,
Would weep with them alone.*

He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker's sight—
Then why should gentle hearts and true
Bare to the rude world's withering view
Their treasure of delight!

No—let the dainty rose awhile
Her bashful fragrance hide—
Rend not her silken veil too soon,
But leave her, in her own soft noon,
To flourish and abide.

* [Genesis xlv. 1. Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him, and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me: and there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.]

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE BURNING BUSH.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. *Exodus* iii. 3. [*First Lesson, Morning Service, Church of England.*]

[We beseech thee, Almighty God, mercifully to look upon thy people; that by thy great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore, both in body and soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Th' historic muse, from age to age,
Through many a waste heart-sickening page
Hath traced the works of man;
But a celestial call to-day
Stays her, like Moses, on her way,
The works of God to scan.

Far seen across the sandy wild,
Where, like a solitary child,
He thoughtless roam'd and free,
One towering thorn* was wrapp'd in flame—
Bright without blaze it went and came:
Who would not turn and see?

Along the mountain ledges green
The scatter'd sheep at will may glean
The desert's spicy stores:
The while, with undivided heart,
The shepherd talks with God apart,
And as he talks, adores.

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* "Seneh:" said to be a sort of acacia.

Ye too, who tend Christ's wildering flock,
Well may ye gather round the rock
That once was Sion's hill:
To watch the fire upon the mount
Still blazing, like the solar fount,
Yet unconsuming still.

Caught from that blaze by wrath divine,
Lost branches of the once-loved vine,
Now wither'd, spent, and sere,
See Israel's sons, like glowing brands,
Toss'd wildly o'er a thousand lands
For twice a thousand year.

God will not quench nor slay them quite,
But lifts them like a beacon light
Th' apostate church to scare:
Or like pale ghosts that darkling roam,
Hovering around their ancient home,
But find no refuge there.

Ye blessed angels! if of you
There be, who love the ways to view
Of kings and kingdoms here;
(And sure, 'tis worth an angel's gaze,
To see, throughout that dreary maze,
God teaching love and fear;)

O say, in all the bleak expanse,
Is there a spot to win your glance,
So bright, so dark as this?
A hopeless faith, a homeless race,*
Yet seeking the most holy place,
And owning the true bliss!

* [The Jews, alluded to in these lines, "a nation scattered and peeled," without a home in the whole world, of which, as the peculiar people of God, they

Salted with fire they seem* to show
How spirits lost in endless wo
May undecaying live.
Oh sickening thought! yet hold it fast
Long as this glittering world shall last,
Or sin at heart survive.

And hark! amid the flashing fire,
Mingling with tones of fear and ire,
Soft Mercy's undersong—
'Tis Abraham's God who speaks so loud,
His people's cries have pierced the cloud,
He sees, He sees their wrong;†

He is come down to break their chain;
Though never more on Sion's fane
His visible ensign wave;
'Tis Sion, wheresoe'er they dwell,
Who, with His own true Israel,
Shall own Him strong to save.

He shall redeem them one by one,
Where'er the world-encircling sun
Shall see them meekly kneel:
All that he asks on Israel's part,
Is only, that the captive heart
Its wo and burden feel.

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were once the favoured heirs. Without a temple, without a sacrifice, without a priest,—how fearfully and wonderfully do they fulfil the old prophetic record! How literally is His blood upon them, and upon their children!]

* St. Mark ix. 49.

† Exod. iii. 7, 8.

Gentiles! with fix'd yet awful eye
Turn ye this page of mystery,
Nor slight the warning sound:
"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet—
The place where man his God shall meet,
Be sure is holy ground."

PALM SUNDAY.*

THE CHILDREN IN THE TEMPLE.

And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.—*St. Luke* xix. 40.

[Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender ove towards mankind, hast sent thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Ye whose hearts are beating high
With the pulse of poesy,
Heirs of more than royal race,
Framed by Heaven's peculiar grace,
God's own work to do on earth
(If the word be not too bold,)
Giving virtue a new birth,
And a life that ne'er grows old—

* [The Sunday next before Easter, so called in reference to the palm branches thrown before our Saviour on his way to Jerusalem, five days before his crucifixion.]

Sovereign masters of all hearts!
Know ye, who hath set your parts?
He who gave you breath to sing,
By whose strength ye sweep the string,
He hath chosen you, to lead
  His hosannas here below;—
Mount, and claim your glorious meed;
  Linger not with sin and wo.

But if ye should hold your peace,
Deem not that the song would cease—
Angels round His glory-throne,
Stars, his guiding hand that own,
Flowers, that grow beneath our feet,
  Stones in earth's dark womb that rest,
High and low in choir shall meet,
  Ere His name shall be unblest.

Lord, by every minstrel tongue
Be thy praise so duly sung,
That thine angels' harps may ne'er
Fail to find fit echoing here:
We the while, of meaner birth,
  Who in that divinest spell
Dare not hope to join on earth,
  Give us grace to listen well.

But should thankless silence seal
Lips, that might half heaven reveal,
Should bards in idol-hymns profane
The sacred soul-enthralling strain,
(As in this bad world below
  Noblest things find vilest using,)
Then, thy power and mercy show,
  In vile things noble breath infusing;

Then waken into sound divine
The very pavement of thy shrine,

Till we, like heaven's star-sprinkled floor,
Faintly give back what we adore.
Child-like though the voices be,
And untunable the parts,
Thou wilt own the minstrelsy,
If it flow from child-like hearts.

MONDAY BEFORE EASTER.

CHRIST WAITING FOR THE CROSS.

Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. *Isaiah* lxiii. 16. [*Portion of Scripture appointed for the Epistle in the Service for the Day.*]

"FATHER to me thou art, and mother dear,
And brother too, kind husband of my heart!"*
So speaks Andromache in boding fear,
Ere from her last embrace her hero part:
So evermore, by faith's undying glow,
We own the Crucified in weal or wo.

Strange to our ears the church-bells of our home,
The fragrance of our old paternal fields
May be forgotten; and the time may come
When the babe's kiss no sense of pleasure yields
Even to the doting mother: but thine own
Thou never canst forget or leave alone.

* [Yet while my Hector still survives, I see
My father, mother, brethren, all in thee:
Alas! my parents, brothers, kindred, all
Once more will perish, if my Hector fall.
Iliad, vi. 429. *Pope's Version*, vi. 544.]

There are who sigh that no fond heart is theirs,
  None loves them best—O vain and selfish sigh!
Out of the bosom of His love He spares—
  The Father spares the Son, for thee to die:
For thee He died—for thee He lives again:
O'er thee He watches in His boundless reign.

Thou art as much His care, as if beside
  Nor man nor angel lived in heaven or earth:
Thus sunbeams pour alike their glorious tide
  To light up worlds, or wake an insect's mirth:
They shine and shine with unexhausted store;
Thou art thy Saviour's darling—seek no more.

On thee and thine, thy warfare and thine end,
  Even in His hour of agony He thought,
When, ere the final pang His soul should rend,
  The ransom'd spirits one by one were brought
To his mind's eye—two silent nights and days*
In calmness for His far seen hour He stays.

Ye vaulted cells, where martyr'd seers of old
  Far in the rocky walls of Sion sleep;
Green terraces and arched fountains cold,
  Where lies the cypress shade so still and deep;
Dear sacred haunts of glory and of wo,
Help us, one hour, to trace His musings high and low:

One heart-ennobling hour! It may not be—
  Th' unearthly thoughts have pass'd from earth away,
And fast as evening sunbeams from the sea
  Thy footsteps all in Sion's deep decay

* In Passion week, from Tuesday evening to Thursday evening: during which time Scripture seems to be nearly silent concerning our Saviour's proceedings.

Were blotted from the holy ground; yet dear
Is every stone of hers; for Thou wast surely here.*

There is a spot within this sacred dale
That felt Thee kneeling—touch'd Thy prostrate brow;
One angel knows it. O might prayer avail
To win that knowledge! sure each holy vow
Less quickly from th' unstable soul would fade,
Offer'd where CHRIST in agony was laid.

Might tear of ours once mingle with the blood
That from His aching brow by moonlight fell,
Over the mournful joy our thoughts would brood,
Till they had framed within a guardian spell
To chase repining fancies, as they rise,
Like birds of evil wing, to mar our sacrifice.

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* ['Tis sweet to Him who treasures love divine,
The coasts with zeal of palmer old to trace,
Hills, vales, and streams of holy Palestine,
And mark in every ancient hallow'd place
What rays of glory wont of old to shine,
What acts of wonder, and what words of grace:
How here the mourner heard glad news of rest,
Here the deaf ear the Saviour's presence bless'd,
The sightless eye beheld, the speechless tongue confess'd.

And sweet to them whose bounded lot at home
Constrains their steps in quietude to stray,
Yea, sweet it is to them, afar to roam
In thought, companions of the palmer's way,
And to the mother land of Christendom
The debt of more than patriot fondness pay,—
If Judah's palmy hills their sojourn be,
Or Jordan's flood, or lone Tiberias' sea,
Or thy once glorious towns, thrice favour'd Galilee!

Bishop Mant, Gospel Miracles, p. 120.]

So dreams the heart self-flattering, fondly dreams;
Else wherefore, when the bitter waves o'erflow,
Miss we the light, Gethsemane, that streams
From thy dear name, where in His page of wo
It shines, a pale kind star in winter's sky?
Who vainly reads it there, in vain had seen Him die.

TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

CHRIST REFUSING THE WINE AND MYRRH.

They gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; but he received it not. *St. Mark* xv. 23. *Gospel for the Day.*]

"Fill high the bowl, and spice it well, and pour
The dews oblivious; for the cross is sharp,
The cross is sharp, and He
Is tenderer than a lamb.

He wept by Lazarus' grave—how will He bear
This bed of anguish? and His pale weak form
Is worn with many a watch
Of sorrow and unrest.

His sweat last night was as great drops of blood,
And the sad burden press'd him so to earth,
The very torturers paused
To help Him on His way.

Fill high the bowl, benumb His aching sense
With medicined sleep."—Oh awful in thy wo,
The parching thirst of death
Is on Thee, and thou triest

The slumberous potion bland, and wilt not drink:
Not sullen, nor in scorn, like haughty man
With suicidal hand
Putting his solace by:

But as at first thine all-pervading look
Saw from thy Father's bosom to th' abyss,
Measuring in calm presage
The infinite descent;

So to the end, though now of mortal pangs
Made heir, and emptied of thy glory awhile
With unaverted eye
Thou meetest all the storm.

Thou wilt feel all, that thou may'st pity all;*
And rather wouldst Thou wrestle with strong pain,
Than overcloud thy soul,
So clear in agony,

Or lose one glimpse of heaven before the time.
O most entire and perfect sacrifice,
Renew'd in every pulse
That on the tedious cross

Told the long hours of death, as, one by one,
The life-strings of that tender heart gave way;
Even sinners, taught by Thee,
Look sorrow in the face,

And bid her freely welcome, unbeguiled
By false kind solaces, and spells of earth:—
And yet not all unsoothed:
For when was joy so dear,

* ["For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them also that are tempted."—*Hebrews* ii. 18.]

As the deep calm that breathed, "Father, for
give,"
Or, "Be with me in Paradise to-day?"
And, though the strife be sore,
Yet in His parting breath

Love masters agony; the soul that seem'd
Forsaken, feels her present God again,
And in her Father's arms
Contented dies away.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN.

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done *St. Luke* xxii. 42. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

O LORD my God, do Thou thy holy will—
I will lie still—
I will not stir, lest I forsake thine arm,
And break the charm
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,
In perfect rest.

Wild Fancy, peace! thou must not me beguile
With thy false smile;
I know thy flatteries and thy cheating ways;
Be silent, Praise,
Blind guide with siren voice, and blinding all
That hear thy call.

Come, Self-devotion, high and pure,
Thoughts that in thankfulness endure,

Though dearest hopes are faithless found
And dearest hearts are bursting round.
Come, Resignation, spirit meek,
And let me kiss thy placid cheek,
And read in thy pale eye serene
Their blessing, who by faith can wean
Their hearts from sense, and learn to love
God only, and the joys above.

They say, who know the life divine
And upward gaze with eagle eyne,
That by each golden crown on high,*
Rich with celestial jewelry,
Which for our Lord's redeem'd is set,
There hangs a radiant coronet,
All gemm'd with pure and living light,
Too dazzling for a sinner's sight,
Prepared for virgin souls, and them
Who seek the martyr's diadem.

Nor deem, who to that bliss aspire,
Must win their way through blood and fire.
The writhings of a wounded heart
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart.
Oft in life's stillest shade reclining,
In desolation unrepining,
Without a hope on earth to find
A mirror in an answering mind,
Meek souls there are, who little dream
Their daily strife an angel's theme,

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* . . . . . That little coronet or special reward which God hath prepared (extraordinary and besides the great crown of all faithful souls) for those "who have not defiled themselves with women, but follow the [virgin] Lamb for ever."—*Bishop Taylor, Holy Living*, c. xi. sect. 3.

Or that the rod they take so calm
Shall prove in heaven a martyr's palm.

And there are souls that seem to dwell
Above this earth—so rich a spell
Floats round their steps, where'er they move,
From hopes fulfill'd and mutual love.
Such, if on high their thoughts are set,
Nor in the stream the source forget,
If prompt to quit the bliss they know,
Following the Lamb where'er he go,
By purest pleasures unbeguiled
To idolize or wife or child;
Such wedded souls our God shall own
For faultless virgins round his throne.

Thus every where we find our suffering God,
And where He trod
May set our steps: the cross on Calvary
Uplifted high
Beams on the martyr host, a beacon-light
In open fight.

To the still wrestlings of the lonely heart
He doth impart
The virtue of His midnight agony,
When none was nigh,
Save God and one good angel, to assuage
The tempest's rage.

Mortal! if life smile on thee, and thou find
All to thy mind,
Think, who did once from heaven to hell descend
Thee to befriend:
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,
Thy best, thine all.

'O Father! not my will, but thine be done"—
So spake the Son.

Be this our charm, mellowing earth's ruder noise
Of griefs and joys;
That we may cling for ever to thy breast
In perfect rest!

THURSDAY BEFORE EASTER.

THE VISION OF THE LATTER DAYS.

At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee, for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. *Daniel* ix. 23. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

"O HOLY mountain of my God,
How do thy towers in ruin lie;
How art thou riven and strewn abroad,
Under the rude and wasteful sky!"
'Twas thus upon his fasting-day
The "man of loves" was fain to pray,*
His lattice open† towards his darling west,
Mourning the ruin'd home he still must love the best.

Oh for a love like Daniel's now,
To wing to Heaven but one strong prayer
For GOD'S new Israel, sunk as low,
Yet flourishing to sight as fair
As Sion in her height of pride,
With queens for handmaids at her side,
With kings her nursing-fathers, throned high,
And compass'd with the world's too tempting blazonry.

* ["O Daniel, *a man greatly beloved*;" Hebrew, *a man of* desires, or *loves*. *Daniel* x. 11.]

† Daniel vi. 10

'Tis true, nor winter stays thy growth,
Nor torrid summer's sickly smile;
The flashing billows of the south
Break not upon so lone an isle,
But thou, rich vine, art grafted there,
The fruit of death or life to bear,
Yielding a surer witness every day,
To thine almighty Author, and his steadfast sway.

Oh grief to think, that grapes of gall
Should cluster round thine healthiest shoot!
God's herald prove a heartless thrall,
Who, if he dared, would fain be mute!
Even such is this bad world we see,
Which, self-condemn'd in owning thee,
Yet dares not open farewell of thee take,
For very pride, and her high-boasted reason's sake.

What do we then? if far and wide
Men kneel to CHRIST, the pure and meek,
Yet rage with passion, swell with pride,
Have we not still our faith to seek?
Nay—but in steadfast humbleness
Kneel on to Him, who loves to bless
The prayer that waits for Him; and trembling strive
To keep the lingering flame in thine own breast alive.

Dark frown'd the future even on him,
The loving and beloved seer,
What time he saw, through shadows dim
The boundary of th' eternal year;
He only of the sons of men
Named to be heir of glory then.*

* Dan. xii. 13. See Bishop Kenn's Sermon on the Character of Daniel.

Else had it bruised too sore his tender heart
To see God's ransom'd world in wrath and flame
depart.

["All these wonderful vouchsafements from above to Daniel, though they were most illustrious demonstrations that he was *greatly beloved*, yet they were indulged him for the sake of others, as well as for his own. There is therefore one more illustrious than all these, and that is a favour which God bestows on but very few, and on none but great saints, who are *greatly beloved*; and not usually on them, till near their death, and is the very top blessing of which man is capable in this life, the highest bliss on this side of heaven; and that is an absolute assurance of a glorious immortality; and such an assurance as this had the *beloved Daniel:* for the angel, having discoursed to him of the resurrection of those that *sleep in the dust, and of their awaking to everlasting life, adds, Go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in the lot at the end of the days.* O the unutterable felicity of this man, thus *greatly beloved by God!* whilst the generality of saints sigh under their flesh and blood, which clogs, and loads, and depresses them; whilst the penitent are still begging their pardon, and the humble full of fears and misgivings, by reason of their numerous failings: while the best of them all see heaven only through a glass darkly, and at a distance, and can reach no higher in this world than hope, and desire, and reliance on God's promise, and patient expectation; *Daniel*, the man *greatly beloved*, has an angel sent on purpose by God, to assure him of his lot in a glorious eternity, and that his mansion there was prepared and brightened to receive him. And yet this is not all; Daniel was not only assured of future glory, but of a *greater* degree of glory than others had: for having made it his *great* business here below to love God himself, and greatly to love him, and to excite others to love God as greatly as he loved him, he was to have more sublime exaltation in bliss than ordinary; the *greater* his love was, the nearer was he to be seated to the throne of God his *beloved*; and having *turned many to righteousness, he was to shine as the*

Then look no more: or closer watch
Thy course in earth's bewildering ways,
For every glimpse thine eye can catch
Of what shall be in those dread days:
So when th' archangel's word is spoken,
And death's deep trance for ever broken,
In mercy thou may'st feel the heavenly hand,
And in thy lot unharm'd before thy Saviour stand.*

GOOD FRIDAY.†

He is despised and rejected of men.—*Isaiah* liii. 3. [*First Evening Lesson.*]

[Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross, who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all estates of men in thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

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stars for ever and ever."—A short Account of the Life of the Rt. Rev. Father in God, Thomas Kenn, D. D. By W. Hawkins, Esq. London, 1713, 12*mo.*

* Dan. xii. 13. Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

† [The most solemn fast of the Christian Church, observed in commemoration of her Saviour's crucifixion, making atonement for the sins of men.]

O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor desirest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics; and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

Is it not strange, the darkest hour
That ever dawn'd on sinful earth
Should touch the heart with softer power
For comfort, than an angel's mirth?
That to the cross the mourner's eye should turn
Sooner than where the stars of Christmas burn?

Sooner than where the Easter sun
Shines glorious on yon open grave,
And to and fro the tidings run,
"Who died to heal, is risen to save"—
Sooner than where upon the Saviour's friends
The very Comforter in light and love descends?

Yet so it is: for duly there
The bitter herbs of earth are set,
Till, temper'd by the Saviour's prayer,
And with the Saviour's life-blood wet,
They turn to sweetness, and drop holy balm,
Soft as imprison'd martyr's death-bed calm.

All turn to sweet—but most of all
That bitterest to the lip of pride,
When hopes presumptuous fade and fall,
Or friendship scorns us, duly tried,
Or love, the flower that closes up for fear
When rude and selfish spirits breathe too near.

Then, like a long-forgotten strain,
Comes sweeping o'er the heart forlorn
What sunshine hours had taught in vain
Of JESUS suffering shame and scorn,
As in all lowly hearts he suffers still,
While we triumphant ride, and have the world at will.

His pierced hands in vain would hide
His face from rude reproachful gaze;
His ears are open to abide
The wildest storm the tongue can raise;
He who with one rough word,* some early day,†
Their idol world and them shall sweep for aye away.

But we by fancy may assuage
The festering sore by fancy made,
Down in some lonely hermitage
Like wounded pilgrims safely laid,
Where gentlest breezes whisper souls distress'd,
That love yet lives, and patience shall find rest.

Oh! shame beyond the bitterest thought
That evil spirit ever framed,
That sinners know what Jesus wrought,
Yet feel their haughty hearts untamed—

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* Wisdom of Solomon xii. 9.

† ["Nevertheless, even those thou sparedst as men and didst send wasps, forerunners of thine host, to destroy them by little and little. Not that thou wast unable to bring the ungodly under the hand of the righteous in battle, or to destroy them at once with cruel beasts, or *with one rough word:* but executing thy judgments upon them by little and little, thou gavest them place of repentance." *Wisdom of Solomon* xii. 8, 9, 10.]

That souls in refuge, holding by the cross,
Should wince and fret at this world's little loss.

Lord of my heart, by thy last cry,
Let not thy blood on earth be spent—
Lo, at thy feet I fainting lie,
Mine eyes upon thy wounds are bent;
Upon thy streaming wounds my weary eyes
Wait like the parched earth on April skies.

Wash me, and dry these bitter tears,
O let my heart no further roam;
'Tis thine by vows, and hopes, and fears,
Long since—O call thy wanderer home—
To that dear home, safe in thy wounded side,
Where only broken hearts their sin and shame
may hide.

EASTER EVE.

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. *Zech.* ix. 11. [*First Morning Lesson.*]

[Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections, we may be buried with him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

At length the worst is o'er, and Thou art laid
Deep in thy darksome bed;
All still and cold beneath yon dreary stone
Thy sacred form is gone;

Around those lips where power and mercy hung
The dews of death have clung;
The dull earth o'er Thee and thy foes around,
Thou sleep'st a silent corse, in funeral fetters wound.

Sleep'st Thou indeed? or is thy spirit fled,
At large among the dead?
Whether in Eden bowers thy welcome voice
Wake Abraham to rejoice,
Or in some drearier scene thine eye controls
The thronging band of souls;*
That, as thy blood won earth, thine agony
Might set the shadowy realm from sin and sorrow free.

Where'er Thou roam'st, one happy soul, we know,†
Seen at thy side in wo,‡
Waits on thy triumph—even as all the blest
With him and Thee shall rest.
Each on his cross, by Thee we hang awhile,
Watching thy patient smile,
Till we have learn'd to say, "'Tis justly done,
Only in glory, LORD, thy sinful servant own."

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* [Easter Eve commemorates the period between the death of Jesus and his resurrection. For the allusion here, see Bishop Horsley on 1 Peter iii. 18, 19—'Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which, also, he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."]

† [The penitent thief. "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." *St. Luke* xxiii. 43.]

‡ St. Luke xxiii. 43.

Soon wilt Thou take us to thy tranquil bower
To rest one little hour,
Till thine elect are number'd, and the grave
Call Thee to come and save;
Then on thy bosom borne shall we descend,
Again with earth to blend,
Earth all refined with bright supernal fires,
Tinctured with holy blood, and wing'd with pure desires.

Meanwhile with every son and saint of thine
Along the glorious line,
Sitting by turns beneath thy sacred feet,
We'll hold communion sweet,
Know them by look and voice, and thank them all
For helping us in thrall,
For words of hope, and bright examples given
To show through moonless skies that there is light in heaven.

O come that day, when in this restless heart
Earth shall resign her part,
When in the grave with Thee my limbs shall rest,
My soul with Thee be bless'd!
But stay, presumptuous — CHRIST with thee abides
In the rock's dreary sides;
He from the stone will wring celestial dew,
If but the prisoner's heart be faithful found and true.

When tears are spent, and thou art left alone
With ghosts of blessings gone,
Think thou art taken from the cross, and laid
In JESUS's burial shade;

Take Moses' rod, the rod of prayer, and call
Out of the rocky wall
The fount of holy blood; and lift on high
Thy grovelling soul, that feels so desolate and dry.

Prisoner of hope thou art*—look up and sing
In hope of promised spring.
As in the pit his father's darling lay†
Beside the desert way,
And knew not how, but knew his GOD would save
Even from that living grave,
So, buried with our LORD, we'll close our eyes
To the decaying world, till angels bid us rise.

EASTER DAY.‡

And as they were afraid and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.—*St. Luke* xxiv. 5, 6.

* Zechariah ix. 12. Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.

† Gen. xxxvii. 24. They took him and cast him into a pit, and the pit was empty: there was no water in it.

‡ Easter, derived from a Saxon word meaning *to rise*, is the name given to the festival which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is always held on the Sunday after the full moon which immediately succeeds the 21st day of March, the vernal equinox. The occurrence of Easter Sunday regulates all the *moveable* feasts of the year. It cannot be earlier than the 22d of March, nor later than the 25th of April.]

[Almighty God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee, that as, by thy special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our minds good desires: so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

Oh day of days!* shall hearts set free
No "minstrel rapture" find for thee?
Thou art the sun of other days,
They shine by giving back thy rays:

Enthroned in thy sovereign sphere,
Thou shedd'st thy light on all the year;
Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter day in every week:†

And week-days following in their train,
The fulness of thy blessing gain,
Till all, both resting and employ,
Be one Lord's day of holy joy.‡

Then wake, my soul, to high desires,§
And earlier light thine altar fires:

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* [Easter was anciently called the *Great Day*, the *Feast of feasts*, and the *Queen of feasts*.]

† [The first day of the week, Sunday, being hallowed from the apostles' times, as commemorative of the resurrection, is, as it were, a weekly Easter.]

‡ ["Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred; but we miss:
There is but *one*; and that one, *ever*."
"*Easter*," *by George Herbert.*]

§ ["Rise, heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays

The world some hours is on her way,
Nor thinks on thee, thou blessed day.*

Or, if she think, it is in scorn:
The vernal light of Easter morn
To her dark gaze no brighter seems
Than reason's or the law's pale beams.

"Where is your Lord?" she scornful asks:
"Where is his hire? we know his tasks;
Sons of a king ye boast to be;
Let us your crowns and treasures see."

We in the words of truth reply,
(An angel brought them from the sky,)
"Our crown, our treasure is not here,
'Tis stored above the highest sphere.

Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayest rise."

"*Easter*," *by George Herbert.*]

* ["It is Easter, beautiful Easter. The time in all the year when nature's types most clearly shadow forth the realities of the Christian dispensation. For the first butterfly has burst from its grave-clothes, and is gone up towards heaven in the light of this season; and look! a thousand blossoms hang on branches that were to all appearance dead last week—nay! that but a fortnight ago were bending beneath a heavy load of snow; and see how the chestnut buds, wrapped up as they were by God's own hand with inimitable art, fold within fold, have heard the voice of God in the garden, and burst their cerements, and sprung forth in beauty, exulting in the life He has renewed to them. And the primroses too are up, round the foot of the old cross, and the daisies and the cuckoo-flowers are awake, and, rising out of their graves under every hedge, tell their tale of hope and the resurrection." *Scenes in our Parish, by a Country Parson's Daughter.*]

Methinks your wisdom guides amiss,
To seek on earth a Christian's bliss;
We watch not now the lifeless stone;
Our only Lord is risen and gone."

Yet even the lifeless stone is dear
For thoughts of him who late lay here;
And the base world, now Christ hath died,
Ennobled is and glorified.

No more a charnel-house, to fence
The relics of lost innocence,
A vault of ruin and decay;
Th' imprisoning stone is roll'd away.

'Tis now a cell, where angels use
To come and go with heavenly news,
And in the ears of mourners say,
"Come see the place where Jesus lay;"

'Tis now a fane, where love can find
Christ every where embalm'd and shrined;
Aye gathering up memorials sweet,
Where'er she sets her duteous feet.

Oh! joy to Mary first allow'd,
When roused from weeping o'er his shroud,
By his own calm, soul-soothing tone,
Breathing her name, as still his own!

Joy to the faithful three renew'd,
As their glad errand they pursued!
Happy, who so Christ's word convey,
That he may meet them on their way!

So is it still; to holy tears,
In lonely hours, Christ risen appears;
In social hours, who Christ would see,
Must turn all tasks to charity.

MONDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

ST. PETER AND CORNELIUS.

Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. *Acts* x. 34, 35. [*Scripture appointed as the Epistle for the Day.*]

[Almighty God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee, that as, by thy special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our minds good desires; so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

Go up and watch the new-born rill
Just trickling from its mossy bed,
Streaking the heath-clad hill
With a bright emerald thread.

Canst thou her bold career foretell,
What rocks she shall o'erleap or rend,
How far in ocean's swell
Her freshening billows send?

Perchance that little brook shall flow
The bulwark of some mighty realm,
Bear navies to and fro
With monarchs at their helm.

Or canst thou guess, how far away
Some sister nymph, beside her urn
Reclining night and day,
'Mid reeds and mountain fern

Nurses her store, with thine to blend
When many a moor and glen are past,
Then in the wide sea end
Their spotless lives at last?

Even so, the course of prayer who knows?
It springs in silence where it will,
Springs out of sight, and flows
At first a lonely rill:

But streams shall meet it by and by
From thousand sympathetic hearts,
Together swelling high
Their chant of many parts.

Unheard by all but angel ears
The good Cornelius knelt alone,
Nor dream'd his prayers and tears
Would help a world undone.

The while upon his terraced roof
The loved apostle to his Lord
In silent thought aloof
For heavenly vision soar'd.

Far o'er the glowing western main*
His wistful brow was upward raised,
Where, like an angel's train,
The burnish'd water blazed.

The saint beside the ocean pray'd,
The soldier in his chosen bower,
Where all his eye survey'd
Seem'd sacred in that hour.†

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* [Peter was at Joppa, on the *eastern* shore of the Mediterranean.]

† ["The sacred peacefulness of prayer." *Bishop Mant, Gospel Miracles*, 2. 32.]

To each unknown his brother's prayer,*
Yet brethren true in dearest love
Were they—and now they share
Fraternal joys above.

There daily through Christ's open gate
They see the Gentile spirits press,
Brightening their high estate
With dearer happiness.

What civic wreath for comrades saved
Shone ever with such deathless gleam,
Or when did perils braved
So sweet to veterans seem?

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

THE SNOW-DROP.

And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and did run to bring His disciples word. *St. Matthew* xxviii. 8.

[Almighty God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee, that as, by thy special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our minds good desires; so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God world without end. *Amen.*]

* [See the beautiful story of Cornelius, in Acts x.]

Thou first-born of the year's delight,*
Pride of the dewy glade,
In vernal green and virgin white,
Thy vestal robes array'd;

'Tis not because thy drooping form
Sinks graceful on its nest,
When chilly shades from gathering storm
Affright thy tender breast;

Nor for yon river islet wild
Beneath the willow spray,
Where, like the ringlets of a child,
Thou weavest thy circle gay;

'Tis not for these I love thee dear
Thy shy averted smiles
To fancy bode a joyous year,
One of life's fairy isles.

They twinkle to the wintry moon,
And cheer th' ungenial day,
And tell us, all will glisten soon
As green and bright as they.

Is there a heart, that loves the spring,
Their witness can refuse?
Yet mortals doubt, when angels bring
From heaven their Easter news;

When holy maids and matrons speak
Of Christ's forsaken bed,
And voices, that forbid to seek
The living 'mid the dead.

* ["We catch the first flower of the season, too, the little snow-drop (*galanthus nivalis*), haply rearing its tiny bell, through the lingering snow, under some hedge or bank." *Mudie's British Naturalist*, vol. ii. p. 107.]

And when they say, "Turn, wandering heart,
Thy Lord is risen indeed;
Let pleasure go, put care apart,
And to his presence speed;"

We smile in scorn; and yet we know
They early sought the tomb,
Their hearts, that now so freshly glow,
Lost in desponding gloom.

They who have sought, nor hope to find,
Wear not so bright a glance;
They who have won their earthly mind,
Less reverently advance.

But where, in gentle spirits, fear
And joy so duly meet,
These sure have seen the angels near,
And kiss'd the Saviour's feet.

Nor let the pastor's thankful eye
Their faltering tale disdain,
As on their lowly couch they lie,
Prisoners of want and pain.

O guide us, when our faithless hearts
From Thee would start aloof,
Where patience her sweet skill imparts
Beneath some cottage roof:

Revive our dying fires, to burn
High as her anthems soar,
And of our scholars let us learn
Our own forgotten lore.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE RESTLESS PASTOR REPROVED.

Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself? *Numbers* xvi. 9. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Almighty Father, who hast given thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that we may always serve thee in pureness of living and truth, through the merits of the same, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

First father of the holy seed,
If yet, invoked in hour of need,
  Thou count me for thine own;
Not quite an outcast if I prove,
(Thou joy'st in miracles of love,)
  Hear, from thy mercy-throne!

Upon thine altar's horn of gold
Help me to lay my trembling hold,
  Though stain'd with Christian gore—
The blood of souls by Thee redeem'd,*
But, while I roved or idly dream'd,
  Lost to be found no more.

* ["But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but *his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.*" *Ezekiel* xxxiii. 6.

"Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed *the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his blood*" *Acts* xx. 28.]

For oft, when summer leaves were bright,
And every flower was bathed in light,
In sunshine moments past,
My wilful heart would burst away
From where the holy shadow lay,
Where Heaven my lot had cast.

I thought it scorn with thee to dwell,
A hermit in a silent cell,
While, gayly sweeping by,
Wild Fancy blew his bugle strain,
And marshall'd all his gallant train
In the world's wondering eye.

I would have join'd him—but as oft
They whisper'd warnings, kind and soft,
My better soul confess'd.
"My servant, let the world alone—
Safe on the steps of Jesus' throne
Be tranquil and be blest.

"Seems it to thee a niggard hand
That nearest heaven has bade thee stand,
The ark to touch and bear,
With incense of pure hearts' desire
To heap the censer's sacred fire,
The snow-white ephod wear?"

Why should we crave the worldling's wreath,*
On whom the Saviour deign'd to breathe,
To whom his keys were given,
Who lead the choir where angels meet,
With angels' food our brethren greet,
And pour the drink of heaven?

* [Can there be imagined a more eloquent delineation of the pure and exalted pleasures of the pastoral office than is afforded in the lines which follow; or a pastoral heart that is not moved by them to deeper gratitude and more devoted earnestness?]

When sorrow all our heart would ask,
We need not shun our daily task,
And hide ourselves for calm;
The herbs we seek to heal our wo
Familiar by our pathway grow,
Our common air is balm.

Around each pure domestic shrine
Bright flowers of Eden bloom and twine,
Our hearths are altars all;
The prayers of hungry souls and poor,
Like armed angels at the door,
Our unseen foes appal.

Alms all around and hymns within—
What evil eye can entrance win
Where guards like these abound?
If chance some heedless heart should roam,
Sure, thought of these will lure it home
Ere lost in folly's round.

O joys that, sweetest in decay,
Fall not, like wither'd leaves, away,
But with the silent breath
Of violets drooping one by one,
Soon as their fragrant task is done,
Are wafted high in death!

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

BALAAM.

He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High: which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall arise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.—*Numbers* xxiv. 16, 17. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that, his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life, through the same, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

O FOR a sculptor's hand,
That thou might'st take thy stand,*
Thy wild hair floating on the eastern breeze,
Thy tranced yet open gaze
Fix'd on the desert haze,
As one who deep in heaven some airy pageant sees.

In outline dim and vast,
Their fearful shadows cast
The giant forms of empires, on their way
To ruin; one by one
They tower—and they are gone;
Yet in the prophet's soul the dreams of avarice stay.†

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* [The prophet Balaam.]

† ["Balaam, the son of Bosor, who *loved the wages of unrighteousness*"—2 *Peter* ii. 15.]

No sun or star so bright
In all the world of light,
That they should draw to heaven his downward eye;
He hears th' Almighty's word,
He sees the angel's sword,
Yet low upon the earth his heart and treasure lie.

Lo! from yon argent field,
To him and us reveal'd,
One gentle star glides down, on earth to dwell;
Chain'd as they are below,
Our eyes may see it glow,
And as it mounts again, may track its brightness well.

To him it glared afar,
A token of wild war,
The banner of his Lord's victorious wrath;
But close to us it gleams,
Its soothing lustre streams
Around our home's green walls, and on our church-way path.

We in the tents abide
Which he at distance eyed,
Like goodly cedars by the waters spread,
While seven red altar-fires*
Rose up in wavy spires,
Where on the mount he watch'd his sorceries dark and dread.

He watch'd till morning's ray
On lake and meadow lay,
And willow-shaded streams, that silent sweep

* ["Build me here seven altars."—*Numbers* xxxiii. 1.]

Around the banner'd lines,*
Where by their several signs
The desert-wearied tribes in sight of Canaan
sleep.

He watch'd till knowledge came
Upon his soul like flame,
Not of those magic fires at random caught;
But true prophetic light
Flash'd o'er him, high and bright,
Flash'd once, and died away, and left his darken'd
thought.

And can he choose but fear,
Who feels his God so near,
That, when he fain would curse, his powerless
tongue
In blessing only moves?—
Alas the world he loves
Too close around his heart her tangling veil hath
flung.

Sceptre and Star divine,†
Who in thine inmost shrine
Hast made us worshippers, O claim thine own;
More than thy seers we know—
O teach our love to grow
Up to thy heavenly light, and reap what thou
hast sown.

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* ["And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents, according to their tribes."—*Numbers* xxiv. 2.]

† ["There shall come a *Star* out of Jacob, and a *Sceptre* shall rise out of Israel;"—prophetic types of the Messiah.]

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

LANGUOR AND TRAVAIL.

[A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.—*St. John* xvi. 21. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty God, who showest to them that are in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*]

WELL may I guess and feel
Why autumn should be sad;
But vernal airs should sorrow heal,
Spring should be gay and glad;*
Yet as along this violet bank I rove,
The languid sweetness seems to choke my breath,

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* [Keble is a dear lover of the spring. It is in harmony with his Christian hopes, and it indulges in him that keen and grateful love of life which breathes in all he writes. "That is the grand time of observation," says one of nature's shrewdest observers, "the busy season with all nature, in every thing that grows and lives. How countless are the millions of little buds, which one of these 'showering and shining' days brings into leaf! They are fresh and washed by the shower; and when the warmth comes, you would absolutely think that you can both see and hear them cracking their scaly cases in which they were confined and protected for the winter; aad that the little green

I sit me down beside the hazel grove,
And sigh, and half could wish my weariness were death.

---

tufts were toiling, like living and rational creatures, at strife, which should produce the finest shoot and the fairest blossom. Then the whisking wings and the thrilling throats are, apparently, enough to put the air into a state of commotion. And they are all in the act of beautifying nature too: some are plucking the dry grass, so that the fields may look green; others are gathering up the withered sticks; others, again, the lost feathers and hairs; and others still are pulling the lichens from the bark of the trees. The merles and the mavises are running under the hedges and the evergreens in the shrubbery, and capturing the snails in their winter habitations, before they have had time to prepare those hordes which would be the pest of the gardeners for the whole season. Other birds are inspecting the buds in the orchard, and picking off every one which contains a caterpillar or a nest of eggs, that would pour forth their destructive horde, and render the whole tree lifeless. Yonder again are the rooks, clearing the meadow of the young cock-chafers, which the heat has brought nearer to the surface; and which, if they were to remain there, would soon begin to eat the roots of the grass to such extent that the turf would peel off as easily as the withered tunic of an onion. Some of them come from a distance too, for there are the white sea-gulls, with their long bent wings and their wailing screams, busy in the same field with the ploughmen, and picking up the 'animal weeds,' while the ploughs are turning down the vegetable ones. All the countless races of that time of labour and love, both native and visitant, are busy following their own purpose, or rather the law of their being, for they form no purpose of their own, or they would sometimes commit errors of judgment as we do, but they do not."—*Mudie's Observation of Nature*, pp. 177, 178.]

Like a bright veering cloud
Gray blossoms twinkle there,
Warbles around a busy crowd
Of larks in purest air.
Shame on the heart that dreams of blessings gone,
Or wakes the spectral forms of wo and crime,
When nature sings of joy and hope alone,
Reading her cheerful lesson in her own sweet time.

Nor let the proud heart say,
In her self-torturing hour,
The travail-pangs must have their way,
The aching brow must lower.
To us long since the glorious child is born;
Our throes should be forgot, or only seem
Like a sad vision told for joy at morn,
For joy that we have waked and found it but a dream.

Mysterious to all thought
A mother's prime of bliss,
When to her eager lips is brought
Her infant's thrilling kiss.
O never shall it set, the sacred light
Which dawns that moment on her tender gaze.
In the eternal distance blending bright
Her darling's hope and her's, for love and joy and praise.

No need for her to weep
Like Thracian wives of yore,
Save when in rapture still and deep
Her thankful heart runs o'er.
They mourn'd to trust their treasure on the main,
Sure of the storm, unknowing of their guide

Welcome to her the peril and the pain,
For well she knows the home where they may safely hide.

She joys that one is born
Into a world forgiven,
Her father's household to adorn,
And dwell with her in heaven.
So have I seen, in spring's bewitching hour,
When the glad earth is offering all her best,
Some gentle maid bend o'er a cherish'd flower,
And wish it worthier on a parent's heart to rest.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE DOVE ON THE CROSS.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. *St. John* xvi. 7. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

My Saviour, can it ever be
That I should gain by losing Thee?
The watchful mother tarries nigh,
Though sleep have closed her infant's eye;
For should he wake, and find her gone,
She knows she could not bear his moan.

But I am weaker than a child,
And Thou art more than mother dear;
Without Thee heaven were but a wild:
How can I live without Thee here?

"'Tis good for you that I should go,
You lingering yet awhile below;"—
'Tis thine own gracious promise, Lord!
Thy saints have proved the faithful word,
When heaven's bright boundless avenue
Far open'd on their eager view,
And homeward to thy Father's throne,
Still lessening, brightening on their sight,
Thy shadowy car went soaring on;
They track'd Thee up th' abyss of light.

Thou bid'st rejoice; they dare not mourn,
But to their home in gladness turn,
Their home and God's, that favour'd place,
Where still he shines on Abraham's race,
In prayers and blessings there to wait
Like suppliants at their monarch's gate,
Who, bent with bounty rare to aid
The splendours of his crowning day,
Keeps back awhile his largess, made
More welcome for that brief delay:

In doubt they wait, but not unblest;
They doubt not of their master's rest,
Nor of the gracious will of Heaven—
Who gave his Son, sure all has given—*
But in ecstatic awe they muse
What course the genial stream may choose,

* ["He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" *Romans* viii. 32.]

And far and wide their fancies rove,
  And to their height of wonder strain,
What secret miracle of love
  Should make their Saviour's going gain.

The days of hope and prayer are past,
The day of comfort dawns at last,
The everlasting gates again
Roll back, and lo! a royal train—
From the far depth of light once more
The floods of glory earthward pour;
They part like shower-drops in mid air,
  But ne'er so soft fell noon-tide shower,
Nor evening rainbow gleam'd so fair
  To weary swains in parched bower.

Swiftly and straight each tongue of flame*
Through cloud and breeze unwavering came,
And darted to its place of rest
On some meek brow, of Jesus blest.
Nor fades it yet, that living gleam,
And still those lambent lightnings stream
Where'er the Lord is, there are they;
  In every heart that gives them room,
They light His altar every day,
  Zeal to inflame, and vice consume.

Soft as the plumes of Jesus' Dove,
They nurse the soul to heavenly love;
The struggling spark of good within,
Just smother'd in the strife of sin,
They quicken to a timely glow,
The pure flame spreading high and low.

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* ["There appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." *Acts* ii. 3.]

Said I, that prayer and hope were o'er?
Nay, blessed Spirit! but by Thee
The Church's prayer finds wings to soar,
The Church's hope finds eyes to see.

Then, fainting soul, arise and sing;
Mount, but be sober on the wing;
Mount up, for heaven is won by prayer
Be sober, for thou art not there;
Till death the weary spirit free,
Thy God hath said, 'Tis good for thee
To walk by faith and not by sight:
Take it on trust a little while;
Soon shalt thou read the mystery right
In the full sunshine of His smile.

Or if thou yet more knowledge crave,
Ask thine own heart, that willing slave
To all that works thee wo or harm:
Should'st thou not need some mighty charm
To win thee to thy Saviour's side,
Though he had deign'd with thee to bide?
The Spirit must stir the darkling deep,
The Dove must settle on the cross,
Else we should all sin on or sleep
With Christ in sight, turning our gain to loss.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

ROGATION SUNDAY.*

And the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him; and I prayed for Aaron also the same time. *Deut.* ix. 20.

[O Lord, from whom all good things do come; grant to us, thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that are good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*]

Now is there solemn pause in earth and heaven;
The Conqueror now
His bonds hath riven,
And angels wonder why he stays below:
Yet hath not man his lesson learn'd,
How endless love should be return'd.

Deep is the silence, as of summer noon,†
When a soft shower
Will trickle soon,
A gracious rain, freshening the weary bower—

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* [*Rogation Sunday* is that which next precedes Ascension Day. The three intervening days, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, are called *Rogation* days, from a Latin word signifying *to beseech*, because for those days extraordinary prayers were provided, especially for a blessing on the fruits of the earth, and for exemption from war and pestilence. They retain their place in the calendar of the Church of England.]

† ["When the air is still, and the smoke ascends in tall columns without blending much with the air, it is a sign of rain." *Mudie's Contemplation of Nature*, p. 174]

O sweetly then far off is heard
The clear note of some lonely bird.

So let thy turtle dove's sad call arise
In doubt and fear
Through darkening skies,
And pierce, O Lord, thy justly sealed ear,
Where on the house-top,* all night long,
She trills her widow'd, faltering song.

Teach her to know and love her hour of prayer,
And evermore,
As faith grows rare,
Unlock her heart, and offer all its store
In holier love and humbler vows,
As suits a lost returning spouse.

Not as at first,† but with intenser cry,
Upon the mount
She now must lie,
Till thy dear love to blot the sad account
Of her rebellious race be won,
Pitying the mother in the son.

But chiefly (for she knows thee anger'd worst
By holiest things
Profaned and curst),
Chiefly for Aaron's seed she spreads her wings,
If but one leaf she may from Thee
Win of the reconciling tree.

For what shall heal, when holy water banes?
Or who may guide
O'er desert plains
Thy loved yet sinful people, wandering wide,

* Psalm cii. 7.

† Deut. ix. 23. I fell down before the Lord forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first.

If Aaron's hand unshrinking mould*
An idol form of earthly gold?

Therefore her tears are bitter, and as deep
Her boding sigh,
As, while men sleep,
Sad-hearted mothers heave, that wakeful lie,
To muse upon some darling child
Roaming in youth's uncertain wild.

Therefore on fearful dreams her inward sight
Is fain to dwell—
What lurid light
Shall the last darkness of the world dispel,
The Mediator in his wrath
Descending down the lightning's path.

Yet, yet awhile, offended Saviour, pause,
In act to break†
Thine outraged laws,
O spare thy rebels for thine own dear sake;
Withdraw thine hand, nor dash to earth
The covenant of our second birth.

'Tis forfeit like the first—we own it all—
Yet for love's sake,
Let it not fall;
But at thy touch let veiled hearts awake,
That nearest to thine altar lie,
Yet least of holy things descry.

Teacher of teachers! Priest of priests! from Thee
The sweet strong prayer
Must rise, to free
First Levi, then all Israel, from the snare.
Thou art our Moses out of sight—
Speak for us, or we perish quite.

* Exodus xxxii. 4. † Exodus xxxii. 19.

ASCENSION DAY.*

Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.—*Acts* i. 11. [*Scripture appointed as the Epistle for the Day.*]

[Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

Soft cloud, that, while the breeze of May
Chants her glad matins in the leafy arch,
Draw'st thy bright veil across the heavenly way,
Meet pavement for an angel's glorious march;†

My soul is envious of mine eye,
That it should soar and glide with thee so fast,

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* [The fortieth day from Easter Sunday, which is always Thursday, is celebrated in commemoration of the ascension of our Lord into heaven.]

† [CLOUDS.

"Cloud land! Gorgeous land!"

Coleridge.

I cannot look above and see
Yon high-piled pillowy mass
Of evening clouds, so swimmingly
In gold and purple pass,
And think not, Lord, how thou wast seen
On Israel's desert way
Before them, in thy shadowy screen,
Pavilion'd all the day!

The while my grovelling thoughts half-buried
lie,
Or lawless roam around this earthly waste.

Chains of my heart, avaunt, I say—
I will arise, and in the strength of love
Pursue the bright track ere it fade away,
My Saviour's pathway to his home above.

Sure, when I reach the point where earth
Melts into nothing from th' uncumbered sight

Or of those robes of gorgeous hue,
Which the Redeemer wore,
When, ravish'd from his followers' view,
Aloft his flight he bore;
When, lifted as on mighty wing,
He curtain'd his ascent,
And, wrapt in clouds, went triumphing
Above the firmament.

Is it a trail of that same pall
Of many-colour'd dyes,
That high above, o'ermantling all,
Hangs midway down the skies—
Or borders of those sweeping folds
Which shall be all unfurl'd
About the Saviour, when he holds
His judgment on the world?

For in like manner as he went—
My soul, hast thou forgot?—
Shall be his terrible descent,
When man expecteth not!
Strength, Son of man, against that hour,
Be to our spirits given,
When thou shalt come again with power,
Upon the clouds of heaven!

Rev. William Croswell.]

Heaven will o'ercome th' attraction of my birth,
And I shall sink in yonder sea of light :*

Till resting by th' incarnate LORD,
Once bleeding, now triumphant for my sake,
I mark him, how by seraph hosts adored
He to earth's lowest cares is still awake.

The sun and every vassal star,
All space beyond the soar of angel wings,
Wait on his word : and yet he stays his ear
For every sigh a contrite suppliant brings.

He listens to the silent tear
For all the anthems of the boundless sky†—
And shall our dreams of music bar our ear
To His soul-piercing voice for ever nigh ?

Nay, gracious Saviour—but as now
Our thoughts have traced thee to thy glory-throne,
So help us evermore with thee to bow
Where human sorrow breathes her lowly moan.

We must not stand to gaze too long,
Though on unfolding heaven our gaze we bend,
Where, lost behind the bright angelic throng,
We see CHRIST'S entering triumph slow ascend.

No fear but we shall soon behold,
Faster than now it fades, that gleam revive,

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* [There is a point in space where, the attraction of the earth being overcome, a body reaching it would be carried out of the earth's orbit. The existence of such a point, in reference to the soul, is here beautifully suggested.]

† [*Notwithstanding* "all the anthems of the boundless sky."]

When, issuing from his cloud of fiery gold,
Our wasted frames feel the true Sun, and live.

Then shall we see thee as thou art,*
For ever fix'd in no unfruitful gaze,
But such as lifts the new-created heart,
Age after age, in worthier love and praise.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION.

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.—1 *St. Peter* iv. 10. [*Epistle for the Day.*

[O God, the king of glory, who hast exalted thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless; but send to us thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

The earth, that in her genial breast
Makes for the down a kindly nest,
Where, wafted by the warm south-west,
It floats at pleasure,
Yields, thankful, of her very best,
To nurse her treasure:

True to her trust, tree, herb, or reed,
She renders for each scatter'd seed,
And to her Lord with duteous heed
Gives large increase:

* ["When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 *John* iii. 2.

Thus year by year she works unfeed,
And will not cease.

Wo worth these barren hearts of ours,
Where thou hast set celestial flowers,
And water'd with more balmy showers
Than e'er distill'd
In Eden, on th' ambrosial bowers—
Yet naught we yield.

Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely thy gifts should be restored;
Freely Thou givest, and thy word
Is, "freely give:"*
He only, who forgets to hoard,
Has learn'd to live.

Wisely Thou givest—all around
Thine equal rays are resting found,
Yet varying so on various ground
They pierce and strike,
That not two roseate cups are crown'd
With dew alike:

Even so, in silence, likest Thee,
Steals on soft-handed Charity,
Tempering her gifts, that seem so free,
By time and place,
Till not a wo the bleak world see,
But finds her grace:

Eyes to the blind, and to the lame
Feet, and to sinners wholesome blame,
To starving bodies food and flame
By turns she brings;
To humbled souls, that sink for shame,
Lends heavenward wings;

* St. Matt. x. 8.

Leads them the way our Saviour went,
And shows love's treasure yet unspent;
As when th' unclouded heavens were rent,
Opening his road,
Nor yet his Holy Spirit sent
To our abode.

Ten days th' eternal doors display'd*
Were wondering (so th' Almighty bade)
Whom love enthroned would send, in aid
Of souls that mourn,
Left orphans in earth's dreary shade
As soon as born.

Open they stand, that prayers in throngs
May rise on high, and holy songs,
Such incense as of right belongs
To the true shrine,
Where stands the healer of all wrongs
In light divine;

The golden censer in his hand,
He offers hearts from every land,
Tied to his own by gentlest band
Of silent love:
About Him winged blessings stand
In act to move.

A little while, and they shall fleet
From heaven to earth, attendants meet
On the life-giving Paraclete,
Speeding his flight,
With all that sacred is and sweet,
On saints to light.

* [Ten days intervened between the ascension of the Saviour and the descent of the Comforter.]

Apostles, prophets, pastors, all
Shall feel the shower of mercy fall,
And, starting at th' Almighty's call,
Give what He gave,
Till their high deeds the world appal,
And sinners save.

WHITSUNDAY.*

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. *Acts* ii. 2, 3. [*Scripture for the Epistle.*]

[O God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

When God of old came down from heaven,
In power and wrath He came;
Before his feet the clouds were riven,
Half darkness and half flame:

* [This festival is designed to commemorate the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles in the shape of cloven fiery tongues. It took place on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, the anniversary of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. The practice in the primitive church of receiving catechumens generally to baptism on this day, clad in *white* robes, probably gave occasion to its name of *white*, or, by contraction, *Whit*sunday.

Around the trembling mountain's base
The prostrate people lay;
A day of wrath and not of grace;
A dim and dreadful day.

But when he came the second time,
He came in power and love,
Softer than gale at morning prime
Hover'd his holy Dove.

The fires that rush'd on Sinai down
In sudden torrents dread,
Now gently light, a glorious crown,
On every sainted head.

Like arrows went those lightnings forth,
Wing'd with the sinner's doom;
But these, like tongues, o'er all the earth
Proclaiming life to come:

And as on Israel's awe-struck ear
The voice exceeding loud,
The trump that angels quake to hear,
Thrill'd from the deep, dark cloud,

So, when the Spirit of our God
Came down his flock to find,
A voice from heaven was heard abroad,
A rushing, mighty wind.

Nor doth the outward ear alone
At that high warning start;
Conscience gives back th' appalling tone;
'Tis echoed in the heart.

It fills the Church of God; it fills
The sinful world around;
Only in stubborn hearts and wills
No place for it is found.

To other strains our souls are set:
A giddy whirl of sin
Fills ear and brain, and will not let
Heaven's harmonies come in.

Come, Lord, come, Wisdom, Love and Power,
Open our ears to hear;
Let us not miss th' accepted hour;
Save, Lord, by love or fear.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

THE CITY OF CONFUSION.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. *Genesis* xi. 8. [*First Morning Lesson.*]

[O God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

Since all that is not heaven must fade,
Light be the hand of ruin laid
Upon the home I love:
With lulling spell let soft decay
Steal on, and spare the giant sway,
The crash of tower and grove.

Far opening down some woodland deep,
In their own quiet glade should sleep
The relics dear to thought,

And wild-flower wreaths from side to side
Their waving tracery hang, to hide
What ruthless time has wrought.

Such are the visions green and sweet
That o'er the wistful fancy fleet
In Asia's sea-like plain,
Where slowly, round his isles of sand,
Euphrates through the lonely land
Winds toward the pearly main.

Slumber is there, but not of rest;
There her forlorn and weary nest
The famish'd hawk has found,
The wild dog howls at fall of night,
The serpent's rustling coils affright
The traveller on his round.

What shapeless form, half-lost on high,*
Half-seen against the evening sky,
Seems like a ghost to glide,
And watch from Babel's crumbling heap,
Where in her shadow, fast asleep,
Lies fallen imperial pride?

With half-closed eye a lion there
Is basking in his noontide lair,
Or prowls in twilight gloom;

* See Sir R. K. Porter's Travels, ii. 387. "In my second visit to Birs Nimrood, my party suddenly halted, having descried several dark objects moving along the summit of its hill, which they construed into dismounted Arabs on the look-out: I took out my glass to examine, and soon distinguished that the causes of our alarm were two or three majestic lions, taking the air upon the heights of the pyramid."

The golden city's king he seems,
Such as in old prophetic dreams*
Sprang from rough ocean's womb.

But where are now his eagle wings,
That shelter'd erst a thousand kings,
Hiding the glorious sky
From half the nations, till they own
No holier name, no mightier throne?
That vision is gone by.

Quench'd is the golden statue's ray,†
The breath of heaven has blown away
What toiling earth had piled,
Scattering wise heart and crafty hand,
As breezes strew on ocean's sand
The fabrics of a child.

Divided thence through every age,
Thy rebels, Lord, their warfare wage,
And hoarse and jarring all
Mount up their heaven-assailing cries
To thy bright watchmen in the skies,
From Babel's shatter'd wall.

Thrice only since, with blended might‡
The nations on that haughty height
Have met to scale the heaven;
Thrice only might a seraph's look
A moment's shade of sadness brook—
Such power to guilt was given.

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* Daniel vii. 4.

† Daniel ii. and iii.

‡ [The allusions throughout this piece are to the four universal empires predicted in the book of Daniel, and to the establishment of Christ's promised spiritual kingdom on the ruins of them all. The sentiment of the last three lines is truly sublime.]

Now the fierce bear and leopard keen*
Are perish'd as they ne'er had been,
Oblivion is their home;
Ambition's boldest dream and last
Must melt before the clarion blast
That sounds the dirge of Rome

Heroes and kings, obey the charm,
Withdraw the proud high-reaching arm!
There is an oath on high,
That ne'er on brow of mortal birth
Shall blend again the crowns of earth,
Nor in according cry

Her many voices mingling own
One tyrant lord, one idol throne:
But to His triumph soon
He shall descend, who rules above,
And the pure language of His love†
All tongues of men shall tune.

Nor let ambition heartless mourn;
When Babel's very ruins burn,
Her high desires may breathe;—
O'ercome thyself, and thou may'st share
With Christ his Father's throne,‡ and wear
The world's imperial wreath.

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* Daniel vii. 5, 6.

† Zephaniah iii. 9. "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

‡ Revelation iii. 21. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN-WEEK.

HOLY ORDERS.

When He putteth forth his own sheep, He goeth before them.—*St. John* x. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[O God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

(Addressed to Candidates for Ordination.)

"Lord, in thy field I work all day,
I read, I teach, I warn, I pray,
And yet these wilful wandering sheep
Within thy fold I cannot keep.

I journey, yet no step is won—
Alas! the weary course I run;
Like sailors shipwrecked in their dreams,
All powerless and benighted seems."

What! wearied out with half a life?
Scared with this smooth unbloody strife?
Think where thy coward hopes had flown
Had Heaven held out the martyr's crown.

How could'st thou hang upon the cross,
To whom a weary hour is loss?
Or how the thorns and scourging brook,
Who shrinkest from a scornful look?

Yet ere thy craven spirit faints,
Hear thine own King, the King of saints;
Though thou wert toiling in the grave,
'Tis He can cheer thee, He can save.

He is th' eternal mirror bright,
Where angels view the FATHER's light,
And yet in Him the simplest swain
May read his homely lesson plain.

Early to quit his home on earth,
And claim his high celestial birth,
Alone with his true Father found*
Within the temple's solemn round;—

Yet in meek duty to abide
For many a year at Mary's side,†
Nor heed, though restless spirits ask,
"What! hath the Christ forgot his task?"—

Conscious of deity within,
To bow before an heir of sin,
With folded arms on humble breast,
By his own servant washed and blest;‡

Then full of Heaven, the mystic Dove
Hovering his gracious brow above,
To shun the voice and eye of praise,
And in the wild his trophies raise—§

* ["Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"]

† ["And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

‡ [John the Baptist, by whom Jesus was baptized.]

§ [From his baptism, Jesus went up into the wilderness, where he was tempted.]

With hymns of angels in his ears,
Back to his task of wo and tears;
Unmurmuring through the world to roam,
With not a wish or thought at home;

All but himself to heal and save,
Till, ripen'd for the cross and grave,
He to his Father gently yield
The breath that our redemption seal'd—

Then to unearthly life arise,
Yet not at once to seek the skies,
But glide awhile from saint to saint,
Lest on our lonely way we faint;

And through the cloud by glimpses show
How bright, in heaven, the marks will glow
Of the true cross, imprinted deep
Both on the Shepherd and the sheep—

When out of sight, in heart and prayer
Thy chosen people still to bear,
And from behind thy glorious veil,
Shed light that cannot change or fail—

This is thy pastoral course, O LORD,
Till we be saved, and Thou adored:
Thy course and ours—but who are they
Who follow on the narrow way?

And yet of Thee from year to year
The Church's solemn chant we hear,
As from thy cradle to thy throne
She swells her high heart-cheering tone.

Listen, ye pure white-robed souls,
Whom in her list she now enrols,
And gird ye for your high emprize
By these her thrilling minstrelsies.

And whereso'er, in earth's wide field
Ye lift, for Him, the red-cross shield,
Be this your song, your joy and pride—
"Our Champion went before and died."

TRINITY SUNDAY.*

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? *St. John* iii. 12.

[Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us, thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine Majesty to worship the Unity; we beseech thee that wouldst keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

CREATOR, Saviour, strengthening Guide,
Now on Thy mercy's ocean wide
Far out of sight we seem to glide.

Help us, each hour, with steadier eye
To search the deepening mystery,
The wonders of Thy sea and sky.

The blessed angels look and long
To praise Thee with a worthier song,
And yet our silence does Thee wrong.

Along the Church's central space
The sacred weeks with unfelt pace
Have borne us on from grace to grace.

* [The festival which commemorates the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity in unity.]

As travellers on some woodland height,
When wintry suns are gleaming bright,
Lose in arch'd glades their tangled sight;—

By glimpses such as dreamers love
Through her gray veil the leafless grove
Shows where the distant shadows rove;—

Such trembling joy the soul o'er-awes
As nearer to thy shrine she draws:
And now before the choir we pause.

The door is closed—but soft and deep
Around the awful arches sweep
Such airs as soothe a hermit's sleep.

From each carved nook and fretted bend
Cornice and gallery seem to send
Tones that with seraph hymns might blend.

Three solemn parts together twine
In harmony's mysterious line;
Three solemn aisles approach the shrine:

Yet all are one—together all,
In thoughts that awe but not appal,
Teach the adoring heart to fall.

Within these walls each fluttering guest
Is gently lured to one safe nest—
Without, 'tis moaning and unrest.

The busy world a thousand ways
Is hurrying by, nor ever stays
To catch a note of Thy dear praise.

Why tarries not her chariot wheel,
That o'er her with no vain appeal
One gust of heavenly song might steal?

Alas! for her Thy opening flowers
Unheeded breathe to summer showers,
Unheard the music of Thy bowers.

What echoes from the sacred dome
The selfish spirit may o'ercome
That will not hear of love or home?

The heart that scorn'd a father's care,
How can it rise in filial prayer?
How an all-seeing guardian bear?

Or how shall envious brethren own
A brother on th' eternal throne,
Their Father's joy, their hope alone?

How shall thy Spirit's gracious wile
The sullen brow of gloom beguile,
That frowns on sweet affection's smile?

Eternal One, Almighty Trine!
(Since Thou art ours, and we are thine)
By all thy love did once resign,

By all the grace thy heavens still hide,
We pray Thee, keep us at thy side,
Creator, Saviour, strengthening Guide!

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ISRAEL AMONG THE RUINS OF CANAAN.

So Joshua smote all the country, and all their kings; he left none remaining.—*Joshua* x. 40. [*First Morning Lesson.*]

[O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments we may please thee, both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

WHERE is the land with milk and honey flowing,
The promise of our God, our fancy's theme?
Here, over shattered walls dank weeds are growing,
And blood and fire have run in mingled stream;
Like oaks and cedars all around
The giant corses strew the ground,
And haughty Jericho's cloud-piercing wall
Lies where it sank at Joshua's trumpet-call.

These are not scenes for pastoral dance at even,
For moonlight rovings in the fragrant glades,
Soft slumbers in the open eye of heaven,
And all the listless joy of summer shades.
We in the midst of ruins live,
Which every hour dread warning give,
Nor may our household vine or fig tree hide
The broken arches of old Canaan's pride.

Where is the sweet repose of hearts repenting,
The deep calm sky, the sunshine of the soul,

Now heaven and earth are to our bliss consenting,
And all the Godhead joins to make us whole?
The triple crown of mercy now
Is ready for the suppliant's brow,
By the Almighty Three for ever plann'd,
And from behind the cloud held out by Jesus' hand.

"Now, Christians, hold your own—the land before ye
Is open—win your way, and take your rest:"
So sounds our war-note; but our path of glory
By many a cloud is darken'd and unblest:
And daily as we downward glide,
Life's ebbing stream on either side
Shows at each turn some mouldering hope or joy;
The man seems following still the funeral of the boy.

Open our eyes, thou Sun of life and gladness,
That we may see that glorious world of thine!
It shines for us in vain, while drooping sadness
Enfolds us here like mist: come, Power benign,
Touch our chill'd hearts with vernal smile,
Our wintry course do Thou beguile,
Nor by the wayside ruins let us mourn,
Who have th' eternal towers for our appointed bourne.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

CHARITY THE LIFE OF FAITH.

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.—1 *St. John* iii. 13, 14. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[O Lord, who never failest to help and govern those whom thou dost bring up in thy steadfast fear and love; keep us, we beseech thee, under the protection of thy good providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

THE clouds that wrap the setting sun
When autumn's softest gleams are ending,
Where all bright hues together run,
In sweet confusion blending;—
Why, as we watch their floating wreath,
Seem they the breath of life to breathe?
To fancy's eye their motions prove
They mantle round the sun for love.

When up some woodland dale we catch
The many-twinkling smile* of ocean
Or with pleased ear bewilder'd watch
His chime of restless motion;
Still as the surging waves retire
They seem to gasp with strong desire;
Such signs of love old ocean gives,
We cannot choose but think he lives.

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* . . . . . ποντιων τε κυματων
ἀνηριθμον γελασμα. . . . . Æschyl. Prom. 89.

Would'st thou the life of souls discern?
  Nor human wisdom nor divine
Helps thee by aught beside to learn;
  Love is life's only sign.
The spring of the regenerate heart,
The pulse, the glow of every part,
Is the true love of Christ our Lord,
As man embraced, as God adored.

But he, whose heart will bound to mark
  The full bright burst of summer morn,
Loves too each little dewy spark
  By leaf or floweret worn:
Cheap forms, and common hues, 'tis true,
Through the bright shower-drop meet his
    view;
The colouring may be of this earth;
The lustre comes of heavenly birth.

Even so, who loves the Lord aright,
  No soul of man can worthless find;
All will be precious in his sight,
  Since Christ on all hath shined:
But chiefly Christian souls; for they,
Though worn and soil'd with sinful clay,
Are yet, to eyes that see them true,
All glistening with baptismal dew.

Then marvel not, if such as bask
  In purest light of innocence,
Hope against hope, in love's dear task,
  Spite of all dark offence.
If they who hate the trespass most,
Yet, when all other love is lost,
Love the poor sinner, marvel not;
Christ's mark outwears the rankest blot.

No distance breaks the tie of blood;
  Brothers are brothers evermore;

Nor wrong, nor wrath of deadliest mood,
That magic may o'erpower;
Oft, ere the common source be known,
The kindred drops will claim their own,
And throbbing pulses silently
Move heart towards heart by sympathy.

So is it with true Christian hearts;
Their mutual share in Jesus' blood
An everlasting bond imparts
Of holiest brotherhood:
Oh! might we all our lineage prove,
Give and forgive, do good and love,
By soft endearments in kind strife
Lightening the load of daily life!

There is much need; for not as yet
Are we in shelter or repose,
The holy house is still beset
With leaguer of stern foes;
Wild thoughts within, bad men without,
All evil spirits round about,
Are banded in unblest device,
To spoil love's earthly paradise.

Then draw we nearer day by day,
Each to his brethren, all to God;
Let the world take us as she may,
We must not change our road;
Not wondering, though in grief, to find
The martyr's foe still keep her mind;
But fix'd to hold love's banner fast,
And by submission win at last.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

COMFORT FOR SINNERS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GOOD.

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. *St. Luke* xv. 10. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to hear us: and grant that we, to whom thou hast given a hearty desire to pray, may, by thy mighty aid, be defended and comforted in all dangers and adversities, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

O HATEFUL spell of sin! when friends are nigh,
To make stern memory tell her tale unsought,
And raise accusing shades of hours gone by,
To come between us and all kindly thought!

Chill'd at her touch, the self-reproaching soul
Flies from the heart and home she dearest loves
To where lone mountains tower, or billows roll,
Or to your endless depth, ye solemn groves.

In vain; the averted cheek in loneliest dell
Is conscious of a gaze it cannot bear;
The leaves that rustle near us seem to tell
Our heart's sad secret to the silent air.

Nor is the dream untrue; for all around
The heavens are watching with their thousand eyes,
We cannot pass our guardian angel's bound,
Resign'd or sullen, he will hear our sighs.

He in the mazes of the budding wood
Is near, and mourns to see our thankless glance

Dwell coldly, where the fresh green earth is strew'd
With the first flowers that lead the vernal dance.

In wasteful bounty shower'd, they smile unseen,
Unseen by man—but what if purer sprites
By moonlight o'er their dewy bosoms lean
T' adore the Father of all gentle lights?

If such there be, oh, grief and shame to think
That sight of thee should overcloud their joy
A new-born soul, just waiting on the brink
Of endless life, yet wrapt in earth's annoy!

Oh turn, and be thou turn'd! the selfish tear,
In bitter thoughts of low-born care begun,
Let it flow on, but flow refined and clear,
The turbid waters brightening as they run.

Let it flow on, till all thine earthly heart
In penitential drops have ebb'd away,
Then fearless turn where heaven hath set thy part,
Nor shudder at the eye that saw thee stray.

Oh lost and found! all gentle souls below
Their dearest welcome shall prepare, and prove
Such joy o'er thee, as raptured seraphs know,
Who learn their lesson at the throne of love

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE GROANS OF NATURE.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God: for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God: for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. *Rom.* viii. 19—22. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[O God, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal; grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. *Amen.*]

It was not then a poet's dream,
An idle vaunt of song,
Such as beneath the moon's soft gleam
On vacant fancies throng,

Which bids us see in heaven and earth,
In all fair things around,
Strong yearnings for a bless'd new birth
With sinless glories crown'd;

Which bids us hear, at each sweet pause
From care and want and toil,
When dewy eve her curtain draws
Over the day's turmoil,

In the low chant of wakeful birds,
In the deep weltering flood.

In whispering leaves, these solemn words—
"God made us all for good."

All true, all faultless, all in tune,
Creation's wondrous choir
Open'd in mystic unison
To last till time expire.

And still it lasts: by day and night,
With one consenting voice,
All hymn thy glory, Lord, aright,
All worship and rejoice.

Man only mars the sweet accord,
O'erpowering with "harsh din"
The music of thy works and word,
Ill matched with grief and sin.

Sin is with man at morning break,
And through the live-long day
Deafens the ear that fain would wake
To Nature's simple lay.

But when eve's silent footfall steals
Along the eastern sky,
And one by one to earth reveals
Those purer fires on high,

When one by one each human sound
Dies on the awful ear,
Then Nature's voice no more is drown'd,
She speaks and we must hear.

Then pours she on the Christian heart
That warning still and deep,
At which high spirits of old would start
Even from their Pagan sleep,

Just guessing, through their murky blind,
Few, faint, and baffling sight,
Streaks of a brighter heaven behind
A cloudless depth of light.

Such thoughts, the wreck of Paradise,
Through many a dreary age,
Upbore whate'er of good and wise
Yet lived in bard or sage:

They mark'd what agonizing throes
Shook the great mother's womb;
But Reason's spells might not disclose
The gracious birth to come;

Nor could th' enchantress Hope forecast
God's secret love and power:
The travail-pangs of earth must last
Till her appointed hour;

The hour that saw from opening heaven
Redeeming glory stream,
Beyond the summer hues of even,
Beyond the mid-day beam.

Thenceforth, to eyes of high desire,
The meanest things below,
As with a seraph's robe of fire
Invested, burn and glow:

The rod of heaven has touch'd them all,
The word from heaven is spoken;
"Rise, shine, and sing, thou captive thrall;
Are not thy fetters broken?

The God who hallow'd thee and bless'd,
Pronouncing thee all good—
Hath he not all thy wrongs redress'd,
And all thy bliss renew'd?

Why mourn'st thou still as one bereft,
Now that th' eternal Son
His blessed home in heaven hath left
To make thee all his own ?"

Thou mourn'st because sin lingers still
In Christ's new heaven and earth;
Because our rebel works and will
Stain our immortal birth;

Because, as love and prayer grow cold,
The Saviour hides his face,
And worldlings blot the temple's gold
With uses vile and base.

Hence all thy groans and travail pains
Hence, till thy God return,
In wisdom's ear thy blithest strains,
Oh Nature, seem to mourn.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE FISHERMEN OF BETHSAIDA.

And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net; and when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake.—*St. Luke* v. 5. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

"The live long night we've toiled in vain,
But at thy gracious word
I will let down the net again:—
Do thou thy will, O Lord!"

So spake the weary fisher, spent
With bootless, darkling toil,
Yet on his Master's bidding bent
For love and not for spoil.

So day by day and week by week,
In sad and weary thought,
They muse, whom God hath set to seek
The souls his Christ hath bought.

For not upon a tranquil lake
Our pleasant task we ply,
Where all along our glistening wake
The softest moonbeams lie;

Where rippling wave and dashing oar
Our midnight chant attend,
Or whispering palm-leaves from the shore
With midnight silence blend.

Sweet thoughts of peace, ye may not last:
Too soon some ruder sound
Calls us from where ye soar so fast
Back to our earthly round.

For wildest storms our ocean sweep:—
No anchor but the Cross
Might hold: and oft the thankless deep
Turns all our toil to loss.

Full many a dreary anxious hour
We watch our nets alone
In drenching spray, and driving shower,
And hear the night-bird's moan:

At morn we look, and naught is there;
Sad dawn of cheerless day!
Who then from pining and despair
The sickening heart can stay?

There is a stay—and we are strong;
Our Master is at hand,
To cheer our solitary song,
And guide us to the strand,

In his own time; but yet awhile
Our bark at sea must ride:
Cast after cast, by force or guile
All waters must be tried:

By blameless guile or gentle force,
As when he deign'd to teach
(The lode-star of our Christian course)
Upon this sacred beach.

Should e'er thy wonder-working grace
Triumph by our weak arm,
Let not our sinful fancy trace
Aught human in the charm:

To our own nets* ne'er bow we down,
Lest on the eternal shore
The angels, while our draught they own,†
Reject us evermore:

Or, if for our unworthiness
Toil, prayer, and watching fail,
In disappointment thou canst bless,
So love at heart prevail.

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* Habakkuk i. 16. They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag

† St. Matthew xiii. 49.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE PSALMIST REPENTING.

David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord: and Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.—2 *Samuel* xii. 13. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[O God, who hast prepared for those who love thee, such good things as pass man's understanding; pour into our hearts such love towards thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

When bitter thoughts, of conscience born,
With sinners wake at morn,
When from our restless couch we start,
With fever'd lips and wither'd heart,
Where is the spell to charm those mists away,
And make new morning in that darksome day?
One draught of spring's delicious air,
One steadfast thought, that God is there.

These are thy wonders, hourly wrought,*
Thou Lord of time and thought,

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* [How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
Are thy returns! even as the flowers in spring,
To which, besides their own demean,
The late past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.
Grief melts away
Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shrivell'd heart
Could have recover'd greenness. It was gone
Quite under ground, as flowers depart
To see their mother-root, when they have flown;

Lifting and lowering souls at will,
Crowding a world of good or ill
Into a moment's vision; even as light
Mounts o'er a cloudy ridge, and all is bright,
From west to east one thrilling ray
Turning a wintry world to May.

Wouldst thou the pangs of guilt assuage?
Lo here an open page,
Where heavenly mercy shines as free,
Written in balm, sad heart, for thee.
Never so fast, in silent April shower,
Flush'd into green the dry and leafless bower,*
As Israel's crowned mourner felt
The dull hard stone within him melt.

The absolver saw the mighty grief,
And hasten'd with relief;—
"The Lord forgives; thou shalt not die:"—
'Twas gently spoke, yet heard on high,
And all the band of angels, used to sing
In heaven, accordant to his raptured string,
Who many a month had turn'd away
With veiled eyes, nor own'd his lay,

Where they together
All the hard weather
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are thy wonders, Lord of power,
Killing and quickening, bringing down to hell
And up to heaven in an hour,
Making a chiming of a passing bell.
We say amiss,
This or that is—
Thy word is all, if we could spell.
Herbert's Poems, (1641,) p. 160.]

* And all this leafless and uncolour'd scene
Shall flush into variety again.
Cowper.

Now spread their wings, and throng around
To the glad mournful sound,
And welcome, with bright open face,
The broken heart to love's embrace.*
The rock is smitten, and to future years
Springs ever fresh the tide of holy tears†
And holy music, whispering peace
Till time and sin together cease.

There drink: and when ye are at rest,
With that free Spirit blest,‡
Who to the contrite can dispense
The princely heart of innocence.
If ever, floating from faint earthly lyre,
Was wafted to your soul one high desire,
By all the trembling hope ye feel,
Think on the minstrel as ye kneel:

Think on the shame, that dreadful hour
When tears shall have no power,
Should his own lay th' accuser prove
Cold, while he kindled others' love:

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* [The idea, in this stanza, of the angels, who had been wont to sing in tune with David's lyre, offended by his grievous fall, but, on the instant of his penitence, restored to sympathizing joy, is beyond all praise. "There is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."]

† The fifty-first Psalm.

‡ Psalm li. 12: "Uphold me with thy *free* Spirit." The original word seems to mean "ingenuous, princely, noble." Read Bishop Horne's Paraphrase on the verse. ["He prayeth to be continued in that state of salvation, by the Spirit of God, which might enable him to act as became a prophet and a king, free from base desires and enslaving lusts."]

And let your prayer for charity arise,
That his own heart may hear his melodies,
And a true voice to him may cry,
"Thy God forgives—thou shalt not die."

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE FEAST IN THE WILDERNESS.

From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?—*St. Mark* viii. 4. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Go not away, thou weary soul:
Heaven has in store a precious dole
Here on Bethsaida's cold and darksome height,
Where over rocks and sands arise
Proud Sirion in the northern skies,
And Tabor's lonely peak, 'twixt thee and noon-day light.

And far below, Gennesaret's main
Spreads many a mile of liquid plain,*
(Though all seem gather'd in one eager bound,)
Then narrowing cleaves yon balmy lea,
Towards that deep sulphureous sea,
Where five proud cities lie, by one dire sentence drown'd.

* [Clear as a crystal mirror in the beam
Of morn, Tiberias lake expanded lay,
As clear and smooth: save where old Jordan's stream
Mark'd through that mirror clear his dimpled way.

Landscape of fear! yet, weary heart,
Thou need'st not in thy gloom depart,
Nor fainting turn to seek thy distant home;
Sweetly thy sickening throbs are eyed
By the kind Saviour at thy side;
For healing and for balm even now thine hour is come.

No fiery wing is seen to glide,
No cates ambrosial are supplied,
But one poor fisher's rude and scanty store
Is all He asks (and more than needs
Who men and angels daily feeds,
And stills the wailing sea-bird on the hungry shore.

The feast is o'er, the guests are gone,
And over all that upland lone
The breeze of eve sweeps wildly as of old—
But far unlike the former dreams,
The heart's sweet moonlight softly gleams
Upon life's varied view, so joyless erst and cold.

As mountain travellers in the night,
When heaven by fits is dark and bright,
Pause listening on the silent heath, and hear
Nor trampling hoof nor tinkling bell,
Then bolder scale the rugged fell,
Conscious the more of One, ne'er seen, yet ever near:

The mist that spread a shadowy veil, at length
Slow up the mountain's side its skirts hath roll'd,
And see the sun, rejoicing in his strength,
Now tip the rocks, now spread the lake with gold.
His sparkling rays on rich Bethsaida fling,
And light Capernaum's towers, tall palms, and limpid spring.

Bishop Mant, Gospel Miracles, p. 47.]

So when the tones of rapture gay
On the lorn ear die quite away,
The lonely world seems lifted nearer heaven;
Seen daily, yet unmark'd before,
Earth's common paths are strewed all o'er
With flowers of pensive hope, the wreath of man forgiven.

The low sweet tones of Nature's lyre
No more on listless ears expire,
Nor vainly smiles along the shady way
The primrose in her vernal nest,
Nor unlamented sink to rest
Sweet roses one by one, nor autumn leaves decay.

There's not a star the heaven can show,
There's not a cottage hearth below,
But feeds with solace kind the willing soul—
Men love us, or they need our love;
Freely they own, or heedless prove
The curse of lawless hearts, the joy of self-control.

Then rouse thee from desponding sleep,
Nor by the way-side lingering weep,
Nor fear to seek Him farther in the wild,
Whose love can turn earth's worst and least
Into a conqueror's royal feast;
Thou wilt not be untrue, thou shalt not be beguiled.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET.

It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord.—1 *Kings* xiii. 26. [*First Lesson, Morning Service, Church of England*]

[O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; we humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which are profitable for us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

PROPHET of God, arise and take
With thee the words of wrath divine,
The scourge of Heaven, to shake
O'er yon apostate shrine.

Where angels down the lucid stair
Came hovering to our sainted sires,
Now, in the twilight glare
The heathen's wizard fires.

Go, with thy voice the altar rend,
Scatter the ashes; be the arm
That idols would befriend,
Shrunk at thy withering charm.

Then turn thee, for thy time is short;
But trace not o'er the former way,
Lest idol pleasures court
Thy heedless soul astray.

Thou know'st how hard to hurry by,
Where on the lonely woodland road
Beneath the moonlight sky
The festal warblings flow'd;

Where maidens to the Queen of Heaven
Wove the gay dance round oak or palm,
Or breathed their vows at even
In hymns as soft as balm.

Or thee perchance a darker spell
Enthralls; the smooth stones of the flood,*
By mountain grot or fell,
Pollute with infant's blood;

The giant altar on the rock,
The cavern whence the timbrel's call
Affrights the wandering flock;
Thou long'st to search them all.

Trust not the dangerous path again—
O forward step and lingering will!
O loved and warned in vain!
And wilt thou perish still?

Thy message given, thine home in sight,
To the forbidden feast return?
Yield to the false delight
Thy better soul could spurn?

Alas, my brother! round thy tomb
In sorrow kneeling, and in fear,
We read the pastor's doom
Who speaks and will not hear.

The gray-hair'd saint may fail at last,
The surest guide a wanderer prove;
Death only binds us fast
To the bright shore of love.

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* Isaiah lvii. 6. Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; they, they are thy lot.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ELIJAH IN HOREB.

And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire, a still small voice.—1 *Kings* xix. 12. [*First Evening Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as are right; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

In troublous days of anguish and rebuke,
While sadly round them Israel's children look,
  And their eyes fail for waiting on their Lord:
While underneath each awful arch of green,
On every mountain-top, God's chosen scene
  Of pure heart-worship, Baal is adored;

'T is well, true hearts should for a time retire
To holy ground, in quiet to aspire
  Towards promised regions of serener grace;
On Horeb, with Elijah, let us lie,
Where all around on mountain, sand, and sky,
  God's chariot-wheels have left distinctest trace;

There, if in jealousy and strong disdain
We to the sinner's God of sin complain,
  Untimely seeking here the peace of heaven—
"It is enough, O Lord! now let me die
Even as my fathers did; for what am I
  That I should stand, where they have vainly striven?"

Perhaps our God may of our conscience ask,
"What doest thou here, frail wanderer from thy task?
Where hast thou left those few sheep in the wild?"*
Then should we plead our heart's consuming pain,
At sight of ruin'd altars, prophets slain,
And God's own ark with blood of souls defiled;

He on the rock may bid us stand, and see
The outskirts of his march of mystery,
His endless warfare with man's wilful heart;
First, His great power He to the sinner shows,
Lo! at His angry blast the rocks unclose,
And to their base the trembling mountains part;

Yet the Lord is not here; 'tis not by power
He will be known—but darker tempests lower;
Still, sullen heavings vex the labouring ground;
Perhaps His presence through all depth and height,
Best of all gems that deck his crown of light,
The haughty eye may dazzle and confound.

God is not in the earthquake; but behold
From Sinai's caves are bursting, as of old,
The flames of his consuming, jealous ire.
Wo to the sinner, should stern justice prove
His chosen attribute;—but he in love
Hastes to proclaim, "God is not in the fire."

The storm is o'er—and hark! a still small voice
Steals on the ear, to say, Jehovah's choice
Is ever with the soft, meek, tender soul:

* 1 Sam. xvii. 28

By soft, meek, tender ways He loves to draw*
The sinner, startled by his ways of awe:
  Here is our Lord, and not where thunders roll.

Back then, complainer; loathe thy life no more,
Nor deem thyself upon a desert shore,
  Because the rocks the nearer prospect close.
Yet in fallen Israel are their hearts and eyes†
That day by day in prayer like thine arise:
  Thou know'st them not, but their Creator knows.‡

* [Beautifully descriptive of the Saviour's way of *drawing* sinners unto him. "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." *St. Matthew* xii. 20.]

† ["Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." 1 *Kings* xix. 18.]

‡ [THE SYNAGOGUE.

"But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." *St. Paul.*

I saw them in their synagogue, as in their ancient day,
And never from my memory the scene will fade away,
For dazzling on my vision still, the latticed galleries shine
With Israel's loveliest daughters, in their beauty half-divine!

It is the holy Sabbath eve,—the solitary light
Sheds, mingled with the hues of day, a lustre nothing bright;
On swarthy brow and piercing glance it falls with sad dening tinge,
And dimly gilds the Pharisee's phylacteries and fringe.

Go, to the world return, nor fear to cast
Thy bread upon the waters, sure at last*
In joy to find it after many days.
The work be thine, the fruit thy children's part;
Choose to believe, not see; sight tempts the heart
From sober walking in true Gospel ways.

The two-leaved doors slide slow apart before the eastern screen,
As rise the Hebrew harmonies, with chanted prayers between,
And 'mid the tissued veils disclosed, of many a gorgeous dye,
Enveloped in their jewell'd scarfs, the sacred records lie.

Robed in his sacerdotal vest, a silvery-headed man
With voice of solemn cadence o'er the backward letters ran.
And often yet methinks I see the glow and power that sate
Upon his face, as forth he spread the roll immaculate.

And fervently that hour I pray'd, that from the mighty scroll,
Its light, in burning characters, might break on every soul,
That on their harden'd hearts the veil might be no longer dark,
But be forever rent in twain like that before the ark.

For yet the tenfold film shall fall, O Judah! from thy sight,
And every eye be purged to read thy testimonies right,
When thou, with all Messiah's signs in Christ distinctly seen,
Shall, by Jehovah's nameless name, invoke the Nazarene.
Rev. William Croswell.]

* Eccles. xi. 1.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

CHRIST WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM.

And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it.—*St. Luke* xix. 41. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Let thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Why doth my Saviour weep
At sight of Sion's bowers?
Shows it not fair from yonder steep,
Her gorgeous crown of towers?
Mark well his holy pains:
'Tis not in pride or scorn,
That Israel's king with sorrow stains
His own triumphal morn.

It is not that his soul
Is wandering sadly on,
In thought how soon at death's dark goal
Their course will all be run,
Who now are shouting round
Hosanna to their chief;
No thought like this in him is found,
This were a conqueror's grief.*

* Compare Herod. vii. 46. ["When he (Xerxes) saw the Hellespont covered with ships, and the whole shore and plains of Abydos filled with soldiers, he at first congratulated himself on his good fortune: but soon after, he shed tears."—"When I reflect," says he, "on the shortness of human life, and that of so many myriads of men, not one will remain one hundred years, I am overwhelmed with grief."—Strange in-

Or doth he feel the Cross
Already in his heart,
The pain, the shame, the scorn, the loss?
Feel even his God depart?
No: though he knew full well
The grief that then shall be—
The grief that angels cannot tell—
Our God in agony—

It is not thus he mourns;
Such might be martyr's tears,
When his last lingering look he turns
On human hopes and fears;
But hero ne'er or saint
The secret load might know,
With which His spirit waxeth faint;
His is a Saviour's wo.

"If thou hadst known, even thou,
At least in this thy day,
The message of thy peace! but now
'Tis pass'd for aye away:
Now foes shall trench thee round,
And lay thee even with earth,
And dash thy children to the ground,
Thy glory and thy mirth."

And doth the Saviour weep
Over his people's sin,
Because we will not let him keep
The souls He died to win?
Ye hearts, that love the Lord,
If at this sight ye burn,
See that in thought, in deed, in word,
Ye hate what made Him mourn.

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consistency in one who was hurrying thousands of them to an untimely death! But such is man.]

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

GEHAZI REPROVED.

Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive yards, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men servants, and maid servants?—2 *Kings* v. 26. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[O God, who declarest thy Almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity; mercifully grant unto us such a measure of thy grace, that we, running the way of thy commandments, may obtain thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Is this a time to plant and build,
Add house to house, and field to field,
When round our walls the battle lowers,
When mines are hid beneath our towers,
And watchful foes are stealing round
To search and spoil the holy ground?

Is this a time for moonlight dreams
Of love and home by mazy streams,
For fancy, with her shadowy toys,
Aerial hopes and pensive joys,
While souls are wandering far and wide,
And curses swarm on every side?

No—rather steel thy melting heart
To act the martyr's sternest part;
To watch, with firm, unshrinking eye,
Thy darling visions as they die,
Till all bright hopes, and hues of day,
Have faded into twilight gray.

Yes—let them pass without a sigh;
And if the world seem dull and dry,
If long and sad thy lonely hours,
And winds have rent thy sheltering bowers,
Bethink thee what thou art, and where,—
A sinner in a life of care.

The fire of God is soon to fall
(Thou know'st it) on this earthly ball;
Full many a soul, the price of blood,
Mark'd by th' Almighty's hand for good,
To utter death that hour shall sweep—
And will the saints in heaven dare weep?

Then in his wrath shall God uproot
The trees He set for lack of fruit,
And drown in rude tempestuous blaze
The towers His hand had deign'd to raise.
In silence, ere that storm begin,
Count o'er His mercies and thy sin;

Pray only that thine aching heart,
From visions vain content to part,
Strong for love's sake its wo to hide,
May cheerful wait the cross beside,
Too happy, if that dreadful day
Thy life be given thee for a prey.*

Snatch'd sudden from th' avenging rod,
Safe in the bosom of thy God,

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* Jeremiah xlv. 4, 5. "The Lord saith thus: Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not, for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord; but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest."

How wilt thou then look back, and smile
On thoughts that bitterest seem'd erewhile,
And bless the pangs that made thee see
This was no world of rest for thee!

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE DEAF AND DUMB.

And looking up to heaven, He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.—*St. Mark* vii. 34. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy, forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord. *Amen.*]

The Son of God in doing good
Was fain to look to heaven and sigh:
And shall the heirs of sinful blood
Seek joy unmix'd in charity?
God will not let love's work impart
Full solace, lest it steal the heart;
Be thou content in tears to sow
Blessing, like Jesus, in thy wo.

He look'd to heaven, and sadly sigh'd—
What saw my gracious Saviour there,
With fear and anguish to divide
The joy of Heaven-accepted prayer:
So o'er the bed where Lazarus slept
He to his Father groan'd and wept:

What saw he mournful in that grave,
Knowing himself so strong to save?

O'erwhelming thoughts of pain and grief
  Over his sinking spirit sweep;—
"What boots it gathering one lost leaf
  Out of yon sere and wither'd heap,
Where souls and bodies, hopes and joys,
All that earth owns or sin destroys,
Under the spurning hoof are cast,
Or tossing in th' autumnal blast?"

The deaf may hear the Saviour's voice,
  The fetter'd tongue its chain may break;
But the deaf heart, the dumb by choice,
  The laggard soul, that will not wake,
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven—
These baffle e'en the spells of Heaven;
In thought of these, his brows benign
Not even in healing cloudless shine.

No eye but His might ever bear
  To gaze all down that drear abyss,
Because none ever saw so clear
  The shore of endless bliss;
The giddy waves so restless hurl'd,
The vex'd pulse of this feverish world,
He views and counts with steady sight,
Used to behold the Infinite.

But that in such communion high
  He hath a fount of strength within,
Sure His meek heart would break and die,
  O'erburden'd by his brethren's sin;
Weak eyes on darkness dare not gaze,
It dazzles like the noon-day blaze;
But He who sees God's face may brook
On the true face of sin to look.

What then shall wretched sinners do,
  When in their last, their hopeless day,
Sin, as it is, shall meet their view,
  God turn his face for aye away?
Lord, by thy sad and earnest eye,
When Thou didst look to heaven and sigh;
Thy voice, that with a word could chase
The dumb, deaf spirit from his place;

As thou hast touch'd our ears, and taught
  Our tongues to speak thy praises plain,
Quell thou each thankless, godless thought
  That would make fast our bonds again.
From worldly strife, from mirth unblest,
Drowning thy music in the breast,
From foul reproach, from thrilling fears,
Preserve, good Lord, thy servants' ears.

From idle words, that restless throng,
  And haunt our hearts when we would pray,
From pride's false chime, and jarring wrong,
  Seal Thou my lips, and guard the way:
For Thou hast sworn, that every ear,
Willing or loath, thy trump shall hear,
And every tongue unchained be
To own no hope, no God, but Thee.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

MOSES ON THE MOUNT.

And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them: and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.—*St. Luke* x. 23, 24. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and merciful God, of whose only gift it cometh that thy faithful people do unto thee true and laudable service; grant, we beseech thee, that we may so faithfully serve thee in this life, that we fail not finally to attain thy heavenly promises, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

On Sinai's top, in prayer and trance,
Full forty nights and forty days
The Prophet watch'd for one dear glance
Of Thee and of thy ways:

Fasting he watch'd and all alone,
Wrapt in a still, dark, solid cloud,
The curtain of the Holy One
Drawn round him like a shroud:

So, separate from the world, his breast
Might duly take and strongly keep
The print of Heaven, to be express'd
Ere long on Sion's steep.*

* See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.—*Hebrews* viii. 5.

There one by one his spirit saw
  Of things divine the shadows bright,
The pageant of God's perfect law;
  Yet felt not full delight.

Through gold and gems, a dazzling maze,
  From veil to veil the vision led,
And ended, where unearthly rays
  From o'er the Ark were shed.

Yet not that gorgeous place, nor aught
  Of human or angelic frame,
Could half-appease his craving thought;
  The void was still the same.

"Show me thy glory, gracious Lord!
  'Tis Thee," he cries, "not thine, I seek."*—
Nay, start not at so bold a word
  From man, frail worm and weak:

The spark of his first deathless fire
  Yet buoys him up, and high above
The holiest creature, dares aspire
  To the Creator's love.

The eye in smiles may wander round,
  Caught by earth's shadows as they fleet;
But for the soul no help is found,
  Save Him who made it, meet.

Spite of yourselves, ye witness this,†
  Who blindly self or sense adore;

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* Exodus xxxiii. 18.

† Pensees de Pascal, part 1, art. viii. ["Considerons le maintenant a l'egard de la felicite qu'il recherche avec tant d'ardeur en toutes ses actions. Car tous les hommes desirent d'etre heureux; cela est sans exception. Quelques differents moyens qu'ils y emploient, ils tendent tous a ce but. Ce qui fait que l'un va a la

Else wherefore, leaving your own bliss,
Still restless ask ye more ?

This witness bore the saints of old,
When highest rapt and favour'd most,
Still seeking precious things untold,
Not in fruition lost.

Canaan was theirs, and in it all
The proudest hope of kings dare claim ;
Sion was theirs ; and at their call
Fire from Jehovah came.

Yet monarchs walk'd as pilgrims still
In their own land, earth's pride and grace ;
And seers would mourn on Sion's hill
Their Lord's averted face.

Vainly they tried the deeps to sound
Even of their own prophetic thought,
When of Christ crucified and crown'd
His Spirit in them taught ;

But He their aching gaze repress'd,
Which sought behind the veil to see,

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guerre, et que l'autre n'y va pas ; c'est ce meme desir qui est dans tous les deux, accompagne de differentes vues. La volonte ne fait jamais la moindre demarche que vers cet objet. C'est le motif de toutes les actions de tous les hommes, jusqu' a ceux qui se tuent et qui se pendent.

" Et ce pendant depuis un de grand nombre d'annees, jamais personne, sans la foi, n'est arrive a ce point, ou tous tendent continuellement. Tous se plaignent, principes, sujets : nobles, roturiers ; vieillards, jeunes ; forts, foibles ; savants, ignorants ; sains, malades ; de tout pays, de tout temps ; de tous ages, et de toutes conditions."]

For not without us fully bless'd*
Or perfect might they be.

The rays of the Almighty's face
No sinner's eye might then receive;
Only the meekest man found grace†
To see his skirts and live.

But we as in a glass espy
The glory of His countenance,
Not in a whirlwind hurrying by
The too presumptuous glance,

But with mild radiance every hour,
From our dear Saviour's face benign
Bent on us with transforming power,
Till we, too, faintly shine.

Sprinkled with His atoning blood,
Safely before our God we stand,
As on the rock the Prophet stood,
Beneath his shadowing hand.—

Bless'd eyes, which see the things we see!
And yet this tree of life hath proved
To many a soul a poison tree,
Beheld, and not beloved.

So like an angel's is our bliss,
(Oh! thought to comfort and appal,)
It needs must bring, if used amiss,
An angel's hopeless fall.

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* Hebrews xi. 40. That they without us should not be made perfect.

† Exodus xxxiii. 20—23.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE TEN LEPERS.

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.—*St. Luke* xvii. 17, 18. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity; and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Ten cleansed, and only one remain!
Who would have thought our nature's stain
Was dyed so foul, so deep in grain?
Even He who reads the heart,—
Knows what He gave and what we lost,
Sin's forfeit, and redemption's cost,—
By a short pang of wonder cross'd,
Seems at the sight to start.

Yet 'twas not wonder, but His love
Our wavering spirits would reprove,
That heavenward seem so free to move
When earth can yield no more:
Then from afar on God we cry;
But should the mist of wo roll by,
Not showers across an April sky
Drift, when the storm is o'er,

Faster than those false drops and few
Fleet from the heart, a worthless dew.
What sadder scene can angels view
Than self-deceiving tears,

Pour'd idly over some dark page
Of earlier life, though pride or rage
The record of to-day engage,
A wo for future years?

Spirits, that round the sick man's bed
Watch'd, noting down each prayer he made,
Were your unerring roll display'd,
His pride of health t' abase;
Or, when soft showers in season fall,
Answering a famish'd nation's call,
Should unseen fingers on the wall
Our vows forgotten trace;

How should we gaze in trance of fear
Yet shines the light as thrilling clear
From heaven upon that scroll severe,
"Ten cleansed, and one remain!"
Nor surer would the blessing prove
Of humbled hearts, that own thy love,
Should choral welcome from above
Visit our senses plain,

Than by Thy placid voice and brow,
With healing first, with comfort now,
Turn'd upon him who hastes to bow
Before Thee, heart and knee;
"Oh! thou, who only would'st be blest,
On thee alone my blessing rest!
Rise, go thy way in peace, possess'd
For evermore of me."

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE FLOWERS OF THE FIELD.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.—*St. Matthew* vi. 28. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fail, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord *Amen.*]

SWEET nurslings of the vernal skies,
Bathed in soft airs, and fed with dew,
What more than magic in you lies,
To fill the heart's fond view?
In childhood's sports, companions gay,*
In sorrow, on life's downward way,
How soothing! in our last decay
Memorials prompt and true.

* ["Look at the little child on the meadow, no matter though it has been born in the very heart of a city, and seen nothing but brick walls, and crowds, and rolling carriages, and pavements, and dust; let it once get its feet upon the sward, and it will toss away the most costly playthings, and never gather enough of the butter-cups, and daisies, and other wild flowers which prank the sod. And if it shall start a little bird, which bounces onward with easy wing, as if it were leaping from portion to portion of the sightless air, how it will stretch its little hands, and shout, and hurry on to catch the living treasure, which, in its young, but perfectly natural estimation, is of more value than the wealth of the world. And if the bird perches on the hedge or the tree, and sings its sweet song of security,

Relics ye are of Eden's bowers,
As pure, as fragrant, and as fair,
As when ye crown'd the sunshine hours
Of happy wanderers there.
Fallen all beside—the world of life,
How is it stain'd with fear and strife!
In reason's world what storms are rife,
What passions rage and glare!

But cheerful and unchanged the while
Your first and perfect form ye show,
The same that won Eve's matron smile
In the world's opening glow.
The stars of heaven a course are taught
Too high above our human thought;—
Ye may be found if ye are sought,
And as we gaze, we know.

Ye dwell beside our paths and homes,
Our paths of sin, our homes of sorrow,
And guilty man, where'er he roams,
Your innocent mirth may borrow.
The birds of air before us fleet,
They cannot brook our shame to meet—
But we may taste your solace sweet
And come again to-morrow.

Ye fearless in your nests abide—
Nor may we scorn, too proudly wise,
Your silent lessons, undescried
By all but lowly eyes:

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the little finger will at once be held up by their little ear, and the other hand will be extended with the palm backward, as if a sign were given by Nature herself for the world to listen and admire."—*Mudie's Observation of Nature*, p. 35.]

For ye could draw th' admiring gaze
Of Him who worlds and hearts surveys:
Your order wild, your fragrant maze,
He taught us how to prize.

Ye felt your Maker's smile that hour,
As when he paused and own'd you good;
His blessing on earth's primal bower,
Ye felt it all renew'd.
What care ye now, if winter's storm
Sweep ruthless o'er each silken form?
Christ's blessing at your heart is warm,
Ye fear no vexing mood.

Alas! of thousand bosoms kind,
That daily court you and caress,
How few the happy secret find
Of your calm loveliness!
"Live for to-day! to-morrow's light
To-morrow's cares shall bring to sight;
Go sleep like closing flowers at night,
And Heaven thy morn will bless."

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

HOPE IS BETTER THAN EASE.

I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.—*Ephesians* iii. 13. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy church; and because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Wish not, dear friends, my pain away—
  Wish me a wise and thankful heart.
With God, in all my griefs, to stay,
  Nor from His loved correction start.

The dearest offering He can crave,
  His portion in our souls to prove,
What is it to the gift He gave,
  The only Son of His dear love?

But we, like vex'd, unquiet sprites,
  Will still be hovering o'er the tomb,
Where buried lie our vain delights,
  Nor sweetly take a sinner's doom.

In life's long sickness evermore
  Our thoughts are tossing to and fro:
We change our posture o'er and o'er,
  But cannot rest, nor cheat our wo.

Were it not better to lie still,
  Let Him strike home, and bless the rod;
Never so safe as when our will
  Yields undiscern'd by all but God?*

* ["Content can never dwell but in a meek and quiet soul. And this may appear, if we consider what our Saviour says in St. Matthew's gospel; for there he says, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy: blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God: blessed be the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God: and blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth.' Not that the meek shall not also obtain mercy, and see God, and be comforted, and at last come to the kingdom of heaven; but, in the mean time, he, and he only, possesses the earth as he goes towards that kingdom of heaven, by being humble and cheerful, and content with what his good God has allotted him. He has no turbulent, repining, vexatious thoughts, that he deserves better; nor is vexed when he sees others possessed of more honour

Thy precious things, whate'er they be
That haunt and vex thee, heart and brain,
Look to the Cross, and thou shalt see
How thou may'st turn them all to gain.

Lovest thou praise?—the Cross is shame;
Or ease?—the Cross is bitter grief:
More pangs than tongue or heart can frame
Were suffer'd there without relief.

We of that altar would partake,
But cannot quit the cost—no throne
Is ours, to leave for Thy dear sake—
We cannot do as Thou hast done.

We cannot part with heaven for Thee—
Yet guide us in thy track of love;
Let us gaze on where light should be,
Though not a beam the clouds remove.

So wanderers ever fond and true
Look homeward through the evening sky,
Without a streak of heaven's soft blue
To aid affection's dreaming eye.

The wanderer seeks his native bower,
And we will look and long for Thee,
And thank Thee for each trying hour,
Wishing, not struggling, to be free.

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or more riches than his wise God has allotted for his share; but he possesses what he has with a meek and contented quietness, such a quietness as makes his very dreams pleasing both to God and himself."—*Isaac Walton's Complete Angler.*]

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

EZEKIEL'S VISION IN THE TEMPLE.

Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the Prophet, I the Lord will answer him according to the multitude of his idols.—*Ezekiel* xiv. 4. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Lord, we pray thee, that thy grace may always prevent and follow us; and make us continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Stately thy walls, and holy are the prayers
Which day and night before thine altars rise;
Not statelier, towering o'er her marble stairs,
Flash'd Sion's gilded dome to summer skies;
Not holier, while around him angels bow'd,
From Aaron's censer steam'd the spicy cloud,

Before the mercy-seat. O Mother dear,
Wilt thou forgive thy son one boding sigh;
Forgive, if round thy towers he walk in fear,
And tell thy jewels o'er with jealous eye?
Mindful of that sad vision, which in thought*
From Chebar's plains the captive prophet brought

To see lost Sion's shame. 'Twas morning prime,
And, like a queen new-seated on her throne,
God's crowned mountain, as in happier time,
Seem'd to rejoice in sunshine all her own;

* Ezekiel viii. 3.

So bright, while all in shade around her lay,
Her northern pinnacles had caught th' emerging ray.

The dazzling lines of her majestic roof
Cross'd with as free a span the vault of heaven,
As when twelve tribes knelt silently aloof,
Ere GOD his answer to their king had given,*
Ere yet upon the new-built altar fell
The glory of the LORD, the Lord of Israel.

All seems the same; but enter in and see
What idol shapes are on the wall portray'd;†
And watch their shameless and unholy glee,
Who worship there in Aaron's robes array'd:
Here Judah's maids the dirge to Thammuz pour,‡
And mark, her chiefs yon orient sun adore.§

Yet turn thee, son of man—for worse than these
Thou must behold; thy loathing were but lost
On dead men's crimes, and Jews' idolatries—
Come, learn to tell aright thine own sins' cost,—
And sure their sin as far from equals thine,
As earthly hopes abused are less than hopes divine.

What if within His world, His Church, our LORD
Have enter'd thee, as in some temple gate,
Where, looking round, each glance might thee afford
Some glorious earnest of thine high estate,
And thou, false heart and frail, hast turn'd from all
To worship pleasure's shadow on the wall?

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* 1 Kings viii. 5.
† Ezekiel viii. 10.
‡ Ezekiel viii. 14.
§ Ezekiel viii. 16

If, when the LORD of glory was in sight,
Thou turn thy back upon that fountain clear,
To bow before the "little drop of light,"
Which dim-eyed men call praise and glory here;
What dost thou, but adore the sun, and scorn
Him at whose only word both sun and stars were born?

If, while around thee gales from Eden breathe,
Thou hide thine eyes, to make thy peevish moan
Over some broken reed of earth beneath,
Some darling of blind fancy dead and gone,
As wisely might'st thou in JEHOVAH'S fane
Offer thy love and tears to Thammuz slain.

Turn thee from these, or dare not to inquire
Of Him whose name is Jealous, lest in wrath
He hear and answer thine unblest desire:
Far better we should cross his lightning's path
Than be according to our idols heard,
And GOD should take us at our own vain word.

Thou who hast deign'd the Christian's heart to call
Thy church and shrine; whene'er our rebel will
Would in that chosen home of thine install
Belial or Mammon, grant us not the ill
We blindly ask; in very love refuse
Whate'er thou know'st our weakness would abuse.

Or rather help us, LORD, to choose the good,
To pray for naught, to seek to none but Thee,

Nor by "our daily bread" mean common food,
Nor say, "From this world's evil set us free;"
Teach us to love, with CHRIST, our sole true bliss,
Else, though in CHRIST's own words, we surely pray amiss.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS.

I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face: like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.—*Ezekiel* xx. 35, 36. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Lord, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

IT is so—ope thine eyes, and see—
What view'st thou all around?
A desert, where iniquity
And knowledge both abound.

In the waste howling wilderness
The Church is wandering still,*
Because we would not onward press
When close to Sion's hill.

* Revelation xii. 14.

Back to the world we faithless turn'd,
And far along the wild,
With labour lost and sorrow earn'd,
Our steps have been beguiled.

Yet full before us, all the while
The shadowing pillar stays,
The living waters brightly smile,
Th' eternal turrets blaze.

Yet Heaven is raining angel's bread
To be our daily food,
And fresh, as when it first was shed,
Springs forth the SAVIOUR's blood.

From every region, race, and speech,
Believing myriads throng,
Till, far as sin and sorrow reach,
Thy grace is spread along;

Till sweetest nature, brightest art,
Their votive incense bring,
And every voice and every heart
Own Thee their God and King.

All own, but few, alas! will love;
Too like the recreant band
That with thy patient Spirit strove
Upon the Red-sea strand.

Oh Father of long-suffering grace,
Thou who hast sworn to stay
Pleading with sinners face to face
Through all their devious way:

How shall we speak to Thee, O LORD,
Or how in silence lie?
Look on us, and we are abhorr'd,
Turn from us, and we die.

Thy guardian fire, thy guiding cloud,
Still let them gild our wall,
Nor be our foes and thine allow'd
To see us faint and fall.

Too oft, within this camp of thine,
Rebellious murmurs rise;
Sin cannot bear to see Thee shine
So awful to her eyes.

Fain would our lawless hearts escape,
And with the heathen be,
To worship every monstrous shape
In fancied darkness free.*

Vain thought, that shall not be at all!
Refuse we or obey,
Our ears have heard th' Almighty's call,
We cannot be as they.

We cannot hope the heathen's doom,
To whom GOD's Son is given,
Whose eyes have seen beyond the tomb,
Who have the key of heaven.

Weak tremblers on the edge of wo,
Yet shrinking from true bliss,
Our rest must be "no rest below,"
And let our prayer be this:

"LORD, wave again thy chastening rod,
Till every idol throne
Crumble to dust, and Thou, O GOD,
Reign in our hearts alone.

* Ezekiel xx. 32. That which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.

Bring all our wandering fancies home,
For thou hast every spell,
And 'mid the heathen where they roam,
Thou knowest, LORD, too well.

Thou know'st our service sad and hard,
Thou know'st us fond and frail;—
Win us to be beloved and spared
When all the world shall fail.

So when at last our weary days
Are well-nigh wasted here,
And we can trace thy wondrous ways
In distance calm and clear,

When in thy love and Israel's sin
We read our story true,
We may not, all too late, begin
To wish our hopes were new:

Long loved, long tried, long spared as they,
Unlike in this alone,
That, by thy grace, our hearts shall stay
For evermore thine own."

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.—*Daniel* iii. 24, 25. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

When persecution's torrent blaze
  Wraps the unshrinking martyr's head;
When fade all earthly flowers and bays,
  When summer friends are gone and fled,
Is he alone in that dark hour
Who owns the Lord of love and power?

Or waves there not around his brow
  A wand no human arm may wield,
Fraught with a spell no angels know,
  His steps to guide, his soul to shield?
Thou, Saviour, art his charmed bower,
His magic ring, his rock, his tower.

And when the wicked ones behold
  Thy favourites walking in thy light,
Just as, in fancied triumph bold,
  They deem'd them lost in deadly night,
Amazed they cry, "What spell is this,
Which turns their sufferings all to bliss?

How are they free whom we had bound,
  Upright, whom in the gulf we cast?
What wondrous helper have they found
  To screen them from the scorching blast?
Three were they—Who hath made them four?
And sure a form divine he wore,

Even like the Son of God." So cried
  The tyrant, when in one fierce flame
The martyrs lived, the murderers died;
  Yet knew he not what angel came

To make the rushing fire-flood seem
Like summer breeze by woodland stream.*

He knew not, but there are who know;
The matron, who alone hath stood,
When not a prop seem'd left below,
The first lorn hour of widowhood,
Yet cheer'd and cheering all, the while,
With sad but unaffected smile;—

The father, who his vigil keeps
By the sad couch whence hope hath flown,
Watching the eye where reason sleeps,
Yet in his heart can mercy own,
Still sweetly yielding to the rod,
Still loving man, still thanking GOD;—

The Christian pastor, bow'd to earth
With thankless toil, and vile esteem'd,
Still travailing in second birth
Of souls that will not be redeem'd,
Yet steadfast set to do his part,
And fearing most his own vain heart;—

These know: on these look long and well,
Cleansing thy sight by prayer and faith,
And thou shalt know what secret spell
Preserves them in their living death:
Through sevenfold flames thine eye shall see
The Saviour walking with his faithful three.

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* Song of the Three Children, ver. 27. "And made the midst of the furnace as it had been a moist whistling wind, [so that the fire touched them not at all, neither hurt nor troubled them."]

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

MOUNTAIN SCENERY.

Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth. — *Micah.* vi. 2. [*First Evening Lesson, Church of England.*]

[O Almighty and most merciful God, of thy bountiful goodness keep us, we beseech thee, from all things that may hurt us; that we, being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things which thou commandest, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

WHERE is thy favour'd haunt, eternal Voice,
The region of thy choice,
Where, undisturb'd by sin and earth, the soul
Owns thine entire control? —
'T is on the mountain's summit dark and high,
When storms are hurrying by:
'T is 'mid the strong foundations of the earth,
Where torrents have their birth.

No sounds of worldly toil ascending there,
Mar the full burst of prayer;
Lone Nature feels that she may freely breathe,
And round us and beneath
Are heard her sacred tones; the fitful sweep
Of winds across the steep,
Through wither'd bents—romantic note and clear
Meet for a hermit's ear,—

The wheeling kite's wild, solitary cry,
And, scarcely heard so high,
The dashing waters when the air is still,
From many a torrent rill

That winds unseen beneath the shaggy fell,
Track'd by the blue mist well:
Such sounds as make deep silence in the heart,
For thought to do her part.

'T is then we hear the voice of God within,
Pleading with care and sin:
"Child of my love! how have I wearied thee?
Why wilt thou err from me?
Have I not brought thee from the house of slaves,
Parted the drowning waves,
And set my saints before thee in the way,
Lest thou should'st faint or stray?

What! was the promise made to thee alone?
Art thou th' excepted one?
An heir of glory without grief or pain?
O vision false and vain!
There lies thy cross; beneath it meekly bow;
It fits thy stature now:
Who scornful pass it with averted eye,
'T will crush them by and by.

Raise thy repining eyes, and take true measure
Of thine eternal treasure;
The Father of thy Lord can grudge thee naught,
The world for thee was bought:
And as this landscape broad — earth, sea, and sky,—
All centres in thine eye,
So all God does, if rightly understood,
Shall work thy final good."

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE RED-BREAST IN SEPTEMBER.

The vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.—*Habakkuk* ii. 3. [*First Morning Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Grant, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people, pardon and peace; that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

The morning mist is clear'd away,
Yet still the face of heaven is gray,
Nor yet th' autumnal breeze has stirr'd the grove;
Faded yet full, a paler green
Skirts soberly the tranquil scene,
The red-breast warbles round this leafy cove.

Sweet messenger of "calm decay,"
Saluting sorrow as you may,
As one still bent to find or make the best,
In thee and in this quiet mead
The lesson of sweet peace I read,
Rather in all to be resign'd than blest.

'Tis a low chant, according well
With the soft solitary knell,
As homeward from some grave beloved we turn,
Or by some holy death-bed dear,
Most welcome to the chasten'd ear
Of her whom Heaven is teaching how to mourn

O cheerful, tender strain! the heart
That only bears with you its part,
Singing so thankful to the dreary blast,
Though gone and spent its joyous prime,
And on the world's autumnal time,
'Mid wither'd hues and sere, its lot be cast:

That is the heart for thoughtful seer,
Watching, in trance nor dark nor clear,*
Th' appalling future as it nearer draws;
His spirit calm'd the storm to meet,
Feeling the rock beneath his feet,
And tracing through the cloud th' eternal Cause.

That is the heart for watchman true
Waiting to see what GOD will do,
As o'er the Church the gathering twilight falls;

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* Zechariah xiv. 6. It shall come to pass in that day, that the night shall not be clear nor dark.

Note.—The expression, "calm decay," is borrowed from a friend: by whose kind permission the following stanzas are here inserted:

TO THE RED-BREAST.

Unheard in summer's flaring ray,
Pour forth thy notes, sweet singer,
Wooing the stillness of the autumn day:
Bid it a moment linger,
Nor fly
Too soon from winter's scowling eye.

The blackbird's song at eventide,
And her's who gay ascends,*
Filling the heavens far and wide,
Are sweet. But none so blends
As thine,
With calm decay, and peace divine.

* [The sky-lark.]

No more he strains his wistful eye,
If chance the golden hours be nigh,
By youthful Hope seen beaming round her walls.

Forced from his shadowy paradise,
His thoughts to heaven the steadier rise;
There seek his answer when the world reproves;
Contented in his darkling round,
If only he be faithful found,
When from the east th' eternal morning moves.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE RULE OF CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS.

Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?—*St. Matthew* xviii. 21. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household the Church in continual godliness; that, through thy protection, it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve thee in good works, to the glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

What liberty so glad and gay
As where the mountain boy,
Reckless of regions far away,
A prisoner lives in joy?

The dreary sounds of crowded earth,
The cries of camp or town,
Never untuned his lonely mirth,
Nor drew his visions down.

The snow-clad peaks of rosy light
That meet his morning view,
The thwarting cliffs that bound his sight,
They bound his fancy too.

Two ways alone his roving eye
For aye may onward go,
Or in the azure deep on high,
Or darksome here below.

mere

O blest restraint! more blessed range!
Too soon the happy child
His nook of homely thought will change
For life's seducing wild:

Too soon his alter'd day-dreams show
This earth a boundless space,
With sun-bright pleasures to and fro
Sporting in joyous race;

While of his narrowing heart each year
Heaven less and less will fill,
Less keenly, through his grosser ear,
The tones of mercy thrill.

It must be so: else wherefore falls
The Saviour's voice unheard,
While from His pardoning cross He calls,
"O spare as I have spared?"

By our own niggard rule we try
The hope to suppliants given;
We mete our love, as if our eye
Saw to the end of heaven.

Yes, ransom'd sinner! would'st thou know
How often to forgive,
How dearly to embrace thy foe,
Look where thou hopest to live:

When thou hast told those isles of light,
And fancied all beyond,
Whatever owns, in depth or height,
Creation's wondrous bond:

Then in their solemn pageant learn
Sweet mercy's praise to see:
Their Lord resign'd them all, to earn
The bliss of pardoning thee.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE FOREST LEAVES IN AUTUMN.

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself. *Philippians* iii. 21 *Epistle for the Day.*]

[O God, our refuge and strength, who art the author of all godliness; be ready, we beseech thee, to hear the devout prayers of thy Church: and grant that those things which we ask faithfully, we may obtain effectually, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Red o'er the forest peers the setting sun;
The line of yellow light dies fast away
That crown'd the eastern copse; and chill and dun
Falls on the moor the brief November day.

Now the tired hunter winds a parting note,
And Echo bids good night from every glade;
Yet wait awhile, and see the calm leaves float
Each to his rest beneath their parent shade.

How like decaying life they seem to glide!
And yet no second spring have they in store
But where they fall, forgotten to abide,
Is all their portion, and they ask no more.

Soon o'er their heads blithe April airs shall sing,
A thousand wild flowers round them shall unfold,
The green buds glisten in the dews of spring,
And all be vernal rapture as of old.

Unconscious they in waste oblivion lie;
In all the world of busy life around
No thought of them; in all the bounteous sky
No drop, for them, of kindly influence found.

Man's portion is to die and rise again—
Yet he complains, while these unmurmuring part
With their sweet lives, as pure from sin and stain,
As his when Eden held his virgin heart.

And, haply, half-unblamed his murmuring voice
Might sound in heaven, were all his second life
Only the first renew'd—the heathen's choice,
A round of listless joy and weary strife.

For dreary were this earth, if earth were all,
Though brighten'd oft by dear affection's kiss;—
Who for the spangles wears the funeral pall?
But catch a gleam beyond it, and 'tis bliss.

Heavy and dull this frame of limbs and heart,
Whether slow creeping on cold earth, or borne
On lofty steed, or loftier prow, we dart
O'er wave or field; yet breezes laugh to scorn

Our puny speed, and birds, and clouds in heaven,
And fish, like living shafts that pierce the main,
And stars that shoot through freezing air at even—
Who but would follow, might he break his chain?

And thou shalt break it soon; the grovelling worm
Shall find his wings, and soar as fast and free
As his transfigured Lord with lightning form
And snowy vest—such grace He won for thee.

When from the grave he sprung at dawn of morn,
And led through boundless air thy conquering-road,
Leaving a glorious track, where saints new-born
Might fearless follow to their blest abode.

But first, by many a stern and fiery blast
The world's rude furnace must thy blood refine,
And many a gale of keenest wo be pass'd,
Till every pulse beat true to airs divine,

Till every limb obey the mounting soul,
The mounting soul, the call by Jesus given.
He who the stormy heart can so control,
The laggard body soon will waft to heaven.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

IMPERFECTION OF HUMAN SYMPATHY.

The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.—*Proverbs* xiv. 10. [*First Evening Lesson, Church of England.*]

[O Lord, we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offences; that through thy bountiful goodness, we may all be delivered from the bands of those sins which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*]

WHY should we faint and fear to live alone,
Since all alone, so Heaven has will'd, we die,*
Nor even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh?

Each in his hidden sphere of joy or wo
Our hermit spirits dwell, and range apart;
Our eyes see all around, in gloom or glow,
Hues of their own, fresh borrow'd from the heart.

And well it is for us our GOD should feel
Alone our secret throbbings: so our prayer
May readier spring to Heaven, nor spend its zeal
On cloud-born idols of this lower air.

For if one heart in perfect sympathy
Beat with another, answering love for love,
Weak mortals all entranced on earth would lie,
Nor listen for those purer strains above.

Or what if Heaven for once its searching light
Lent to some partial eye, disclosing all
The rude bad thoughts, that in our bosom's night
Wander at large, nor heed love's gentle thrall?

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* Je mourrai seul. *Pascal.* [The entire passage is as follows: "Pour moi, je n'ai pu m'y arreter ni me reposer dans la societe de ces personnes semblables a moi, miserables comme moi. Je vois qu'ils ne m'aideroient pas a mourir, je mourrai seul; il faut donc faire comme si j'etais seul; ou, si j'etois seul je ne batirois point des maisons, je ne m'embarrasserois point dans les occupations tumultuaires, je ne chercherois l'estime de personne; mais je tacherois seulement de couvrir la verite."--*Pensees*, c. viii. sec. 1.]

Who would not shun the dreary uncouth place?
As if, fond leaning where her infant slept,
A mother's arm a serpent should embrace:
So might we friendless live, and die unwept.

Then keep the softening veil in mercy drawn,
Thou who canst love us, though thou read us true;
As on the bosom of th' aerial lawn
Melts in dim haze each coarse ungentle hue.

So too may soothing Hope thy leave enjoy
Sweet visions of long sever'd hearts to frame;
Though absence may impair, or cares annoy,
Some constant mind may draw us still the same.

We in dark dreams are tossing to and fro,
Pine with regret, or sicken with despair,
The while she bathes us in her own chaste glow,
And with our memory wings her own fond prayer.

O bliss of child-like innocence, and love
Tried to old age! creative power to win,
And raise new worlds, where happy fancies rove,
Forgetting quite this grosser world of sin.

Bright are their dreams, because their thoughts are clear,
Their memory cheering; but the earth-stain'd sprite,
Whose wakeful musings are of guilt and fear,
Must hover nearer earth, and less in light.

Farewell, for her, the ideal scenes so fair—
Yet not farewell her hope, since Thou hast deign'd,
Creator of all hearts! to own and share
The wo of what Thou madest, and we have stain'd.

Thou know'st our bitterness—our joys are thine;*
No stranger Thou to all our wanderings wild;
Nor could we bear to think, how every line
Of us, thy darken'd likeness and defiled,

Stands in full sunshine of thy piercing eye,
But that thou call'st us brethren: sweet repose
Is in that word—the Lord who dwells on high
Knows all, yet loves us better than He knows.

WENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE TWO RAINBOWS.

The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.—*Proverbs* xvi. 31. [*First Evening Lesson, Church of England.*]

[Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

The bright-hair'd morn is glowing
O'er emerald meadows gay,
With many a clear gem strowing
The early shepherd's way.
Ye gentle elves, by fancy seen
Stealing away with night
To slumber in your leafy screen,
Tread more than airy light.

* Psalm xxxi. 7. Thou hast known my soul in adversities.

And see what joyous greeting
  The sun through heaven has shed;
Though fast yon shower be fleeting,
  His beams have faster sped,
For lo! above the western haze
  High towers the rainbow arch
In solid span of purest rays:
  How stately is its march!

Pride of the dewy morning!
  The swain's experienced eye
From thee takes timely warning,*
  Nor trusts the gorgeous sky;
For well he knows, such dawnings gay
  Bring noons of storm and shower,
And travellers linger on the way
  Beside the sheltering bower.

Even so, in hope and trembling,
  Should watchful shepherd view
His little lambs assembling,
  With glance both kind and true;
'T is not the eye of keenest blaze,
  Nor the quick-swelling breast
That soonest thrills at touch of praise—
  These do not please him best.

But voices low and gentle,
  And timid glances shy,
That seem for aid parental
  To sue all wistfully,
Still pressing, longing to be right,
  Yet fearing to be wrong—
In these the pastor dares delight,
  A lamb-like, Christ-like throng.

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* [The rainbow in the morning
  Is the sailor's warning. *Old proverb*]

These in life's distant even
  Shall shine serenely bright.
As in th' autumnal heaven
  Mild rainbow tints at night,
When the last shower is stealing down,
  And ere they sink to rest,
The sun-beams weave a parting crown
  For some sweet woodland nest.

The promise of the morrow
  Is glorious on that eve,*
Dear as the holy sorrow
  When good men cease to live;
When, brightening ere it die away,
  Mounts up their altar flame,
Still tending with intenser ray
  To heaven, whence first it came.

Say not it dies, that glory,—
  'T is caught unquench'd on high;
Those saint-like brows so hoary
  Shall wear it in the sky.
No smile is like the smile of death,
  When all good musings past
Rise wafted with the parting breath,
  The sweetest thought the last.

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT.

SELF-EXAMINATION BEFORE ADVENT.

Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.—*St. John* vi. 12. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

* [The rainbow at night
  Is the sailor's delight. *Old proverb.*]

[Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Will God indeed with fragments bear,
Snatch'd late from the decaying year?
Or can the Saviour's blood endear
The dregs of a polluted life?
When down th' o'erwhelming current toss'd,
Just ere he sink, for ever lost,
The sailor's untried arms are cross'd
In agonizing prayer, will ocean cease her strife?

Sighs that exhaust but not relieve,
Heart-rending sighs, oh, spare to heave
A bosom freshly taught to grieve
For lavish'd hours and love misspent!
Now through her round of holy thought
The Church our annual steps has brought,
But we no holy fire have caught—
Back on the gaudy world our wilful eyes were bent.

Too soon th' ennobling carols, pour'd
To hymn the birth-night of the Lord,*
Which duteous memory should have stored
For thankful echoing all the year—
Too soon those airs have pass'd away;
Nor long within the heart would stay
The silence of Christ's dying day,†
Profaned by worldly mirth, or scared by worldly fear.

Some strain of hope and victory
On Easter wings might lift us high;
A little while we sought the sky:

* [Christmas.] † [Good Friday.]

And when the SPIRIT's beacon fires*
On every hill began to blaze,
Lightening the world with glad amaze,
Who but must kindle while they gaze?
But faster than she soars, our earth-bound fancy
tires.

Nor yet for these, nor all the rites
By which our Mother's voice invites
Our GOD to bless our home delights,
And sweeten every secret tear;—
The funeral dirge, the marriage vow,
The hallow'd font where parents bow,
And now elate and trembling now
To the Redeemer's feet their new-found treasures
bear:

Not for the pastor's gracious arm
Stretch'd out to bless—a Christian charm
To dull the shafts of worldly harm:—
Nor, sweetest, holiest, best of all,
For the dear feast of JESUS dying,
Upon that altar ever lying,
Where souls with sacred hunger sighing
Are call'd to sit and eat, while angels prostrate
fall;—

No, not for each and all of these
Have our frail spirits found their ease.
The gale that stirs th' autumnal trees
Seems tuned as truly to our hearts
As when, twelve weary months ago,
'T was moaning bleak, so high and low,
You would have thought remorse and wo
Had taught the innocent air their sadly thrilling
parts.

* [Whitsunday.]

Is it, CHRIST's light is too divine.
We dare not hope like Him to shine?
But see, around His dazzling shrine
Earth's gems the fire of Heaven have caught;
Martyrs and saints—each glorious day
Dawning in order on our way—
Remind us, how our darksome clay
May keep th' ethereal warmth our new Creator brought.

These we have scorn'd, O false and frail!
And now once more th' appalling tale,
How love divine may woo and fail,
Of our lost year in heaven is told—
What if as far our life were past,
Our weeks all number'd to the last,
With time and hope behind us cast,
And all our work to do with palsied hands and cold?

O watch and pray ere Advent dawn!
For thinner than the subtlest lawn
'Twixt thee and death the veil is drawn.
But love too late can never glow:
The scatter'd fragments love can glean,
Refine the dregs, and yield us clean
To regions where one thought serene
Breathes sweeter than whole years of sacrifice below.

ST. ANDREW'S DAY.*

[NOVEMBER 30.]

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias; and he brought him unto Jesus. *St. John* i. 41, 42.

[Almighty God, who didst give such grace unto thy holy Apostle Saint Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay; grant unto us all, that we, being called by thy holy word, may forthwith give up ourselves obediently to fulfil thy holy commandments, through the same, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

WHEN brothers part for manhood's race,
What gift may most endearing prove
To keep fond memory in her place,
And certify a brother's love?

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* [St. Andrew was a native of Bethsaida, in Galilee. He was the son of a fisherman named Jonas, and the brother of Simon, surnamed Peter. He had been the disciple of John the Baptist, and was one of the two to whom John pointed out the Saviour as "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." It was his happiness to introduce his more illustrious brother, the apostle Peter, to the knowledge of Jesus: hence sometimes called, in reference to Peter's emblematic name, "the rock before the rock." He was ordained an apostle by our Lord. It is said that Scythia was chiefly the field of his labours; and that the instrument of his martyrdom was a cross of a peculiar form (X), known as St. Andrew's Cross. The Scotch, who chose him as their patron saint, had a tradition that his remains were brought to St. Andrews, A. D. 368, and entombed there. The festival of St. Andrew determines the beginning of the season

'T is true, bright hours together told,
And blissful dreams in secret shared,
Serene or solemn, gay or bold,
Shall last in fancy unimpair'd.

Even round the death-bed of the good
Such dear remembrances will hover,
And haunt us with no vexing mood
When all the cares of earth are over.

But yet our craving spirits feel
We shall live on, though fancy die,
And seek a surer pledge—a seal
Of love to last eternally.

Who art thou, that wouldst grave thy name
Thus deeply in a brother's heart?*
Look on this saint, and learn to frame
Thy love-charm with true Christian art.

First seek thy Saviour out, and dwell
Beneath the shadow of his roof,†
Till thou have scann'd his features well,
And known Him for the Christ by proof—

---

of Advent. (See note on Advent Sunday.) The honour of thus announcing, as it were, the coming of the Lord, may have been assigned to him, says Bishop Sparrow, because "it was he who first came to Christ, and followed him before any of the other apostles."]

* [It is a beautiful circumstance that the two disciples who first came to Jesus were brothers in the flesh, and that the one led the other to him. The bond of brotherhood may well be close and holy. But how much more so when, as here, nature is consecrated by grace!]

† [When Andrew and the other disciple to whom John spake, had followed Jesus till they saw where he dwelt, they "abode with him that day." The ac-

Such proof as they are sure to find,
Who spend with him their happier days:
Clean hands, and a self-ruling mind
Ever in tune for love and praise.

Then, potent with the spell of heaven,
Go, and thine erring brother gain ;*
Entice him home to be forgiven,
Till he, too, see his Saviour plain.

Or, if before thee in the race,
Urge him with thine advancing tread,
Till, like twin stars, with even pace,
Each lucid course be duly sped.

No fading frail memorial give
To soothe his soul when thou art gone,
But wreathes of hope for aye to live,
And thoughts of good together done.

That so, before the judgment-seat
Though changed and glorified each face,
Not unremembered ye may meet
For endless ages to embrace.†

---

count which John had given of him made them in earnest to know him, and they took the proper means, personal acquaintance. They did not go, and look, and come away. They "abode with him." Is it not universally in his sacrificial character, as the Lamb of God, taking away sin, that the Saviour permanently impresses the hearts of men,—draws them and keeps them ?]

*["He first findeth *his own brother* Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias; and he brought him to Jesus." His intercourse with him whom John describes as the "Lamb of God," enabled Andrew to recognise him as the Messias, the Christ, or Anointed.]

†[There is here allusion made to that hope of re-

ST. THOMAS' DAY.*

[DECEMBER 21.]

Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.—*St. John* xx. 29. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Almighty and ever living God, who, for the greater confirmation of the faith, didst suffer thy holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful in thy Son's resurrection; grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy sight may never be reproved. Hear us, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. *Amen.*]

WE were not by when Jesus came,†
But round us, far and near,

---

cognition in a future state in which many pious Christians not groundlessly indulge. Bishop Mant, in his "Happiness of the Blessed," has fully investigated the subject, by the light of Scripture, and shown it to be at least probable. There is an able sermon, too, on this interesting subject, by my long-loved friend, the Rev. Benjamin Dorr, rector of Trinity Church, Utica. —Since the first edition, this sermon has been enlarged and published in a neat little volume, entitled, "Recognition of Friends in another World."]

* [Thomas, called also Didymus, *the twin*, was a fisherman of Galilee. He is chiefly memorable for his strange incredulity, and its complete conviction. He was an apostle of our Lord, and is said by Origen to have laboured chiefly in Parthia. A race of Christians have been found near the coast of Malabar, known as the "Christians of St. Thomas," and claiming spiritual descent from him. See Dr. Buchanan's very interesting "*Christian Researches in India.*"]

† St. John xx. 24. Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

We see his trophies, and his name
In choral echoes hear.
n a fair ground our lot is cast,
As in the solemn week that past,
While some might doubt, but all ador'd,*
Ere the whole widow'd Church had seen her riser
Lord.

Slowly, as then, His bounteous hand
The golden chain unwinds,
Drawing to Heaven with gentlest band
Wise hearts and loving minds.
Love sought him first—at dawn of morn†
From her sad couch she sprang forlorn,
She sought to weep with Thee alone,
And saw thine open grave, and knew that thou
wert gone.

Reason and Faith at once set out‡
To search the Saviour's tomb;
Faith faster runs, but waits without,
As fearing to presume,
Till Reason enter in, and trace
Christ's relics round the holy place—
"Here lay His limbs, and here His sacred
head,
And who was by, to make his new-forsaken bed?"

---

* St. Matt. xxviii. 17. When they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

† St. Mary Magdalen's visit to the sepulchre.

["Not she with traitorous kiss her Saviour stung,
Not she denied him with unholy tongue:
She, while apostles shrunk, could danger brave,
Last at his cross, and earliest at his grave."
Woman, a Poem, by Barret.]

‡ St. Peter and St. John

Both wonder, one believes—but while
They muse on all at home,
No thought can tender love beguile
From Jesus' grave to roam.
Weeping she stays till He appear—
Her witness first the Church must hear*—
All joy to souls that can rejoice
With her at earliest call of His dear gracious voice.

Joy too to those, who love to talk
In secret how He died,
Though with seal'd eyes awhile they walk,
Nor see Him at their side;
Most like the faithful pair are they,†
Who once to Emmaus took their way,
Half darkling, till their Master shed
His glory on their souls, made known in breaking bread.

Thus, ever brighter and more bright,
On those he came to save
The Lord of new-created light
Dawn'd gradual from the grave:
Till pass'd th' inquiring daylight hour,
And with clos'd door in silent bower‡

* [The first appearance of the risen Saviour was to her out of whom he had cast seven devils. A touching circumstance, full of encouragement, and beautifully illustrative of His tender love, who is not willing that any should perish, and desires the salvation even of the chief of sinners.]

† [St. Luke xxiv. 13-32.]

‡ [St. John xx. 19. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.]

The Church in anxious musing sate,
As one who for redemption still had long to wait.

Then, gliding through th' unopening door,
Smooth without step or sound,
"Peace to your souls," He said—no more—
They own him, kneeling round.
Eye, ear, and hand, and loving heart,*
Body and soul in every part,
Successive made his witnesses that hour,
Cease not in all the world to show his saving power.

Is there, on earth, a spirit frail,
Who fears to take their word,
Scarce daring, through the twilight pale,
To think he sees the Lord?
With eyes too tremblingly awake
To bear with dimness for His sake?
Read and confess the hand divine
That drew thy likeness here so true in every line.

For all thy rankling doubts so sore,
Love thou thy Saviour still,
Him for thy Lord and God adore,†
And ever do His will.

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* [He snowed unto them his hands and his side.]

† [The unbelief of Thomas, or, as the Collect expresses it, his "doubtfulness in Christ's resurrection" removed, most naturally carries him to the fullest expression of his conviction not only of that fact, but of his full divinity, "My Lord, and my God!"—Is not this ardour of conviction very characteristic in him who before had said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him?"—*St. John* xi. 16.]

Though vexing thoughts may seem to last,
Let not thy soul be quite o'ercast;—
Soon will he show thee all His wounds, and say,
"Long have I known thy name*—know thou my face alway."

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.†

[JANUARY 25.]

And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.—*Acts* ix. 4, 5. [*Scripture for the Epistle.*]

[O God, who through the preaching of the blessed Apostle Saint Paul, hast caused the light of the gospel to shine throughout the world; grant, we beseech thee, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show forth our thankfulness unto thee for the same, by following the holy doctrine which he taught, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

THE midday sun, with fiercest glare,
Broods o'er the hazy, twinkling air;
Along the level sand
The palm tree's shade unwavering lies,
Just as thy towers, Damascus, rise
To greet yon wearied band.

* In Exodus xxxiii. 17, God says to Moses, "I know thee by name;" meaning, "I bear especial favour towards thee." Thus our Saviour speaks to St. Thomas by name in the place here referred to.

† [Paul, whose name was Saul, was a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia. He was instructed in all the learning of his nation by the celebrated Gamaliel. In accordance,

The leader of that martial crew
Seems bent some mighty deed to do,
So steadily he speeds,
With lips firm closed and fixed eye,
Like warrior when the fight is nigh,
Nor talk nor landscape heeds.

What sudden blaze is round him pour'd,
As though all heaven's refulgent hoard
In one rich glory shone?
One moment—and to earth he falls;
What voice his inmost heart appals?—
Voice heard by him alone.

For to the rest both words and form
Seem lost in lightning and in storm,
While Saul, in wakeful trance,
Sees deep within that dazzling field
His persecuted Lord reveal'd
With keen yet pitying glance;

And hears the meek upbraiding call
As gently on his spirit fall,
As if th' Almighty Son

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however, with Jewish usages, he learned the trade of a tent-maker. Being a great zealot for the law, he exerted himself in every way to oppose Christianity, and destroy its professors. It was on a journey of persecution to Damascus, that he was suddenly arrested by a light from heaven, and miraculously converted to the Christian faith by the voice of the Lord Jesus himself. At the same time he was called to be an Apostle, and sent especially to the Gentiles. After great labours and perils, in which he planted many churches, and wrote fourteen epistles, he suffered martyrdom at Rome, under Nero, A. D. 68. The festival appointed in his honour commemorates, not, as usual, his death, but his conversion. The argument for the truth of Christianity from this event has been most admirably stated by Lord Lyttleton.]

Were prisoner yet in this dark earth,
Nor had proclaim'd his royal birth,
Nor his great power begun.

"Ah! wherefore persecutest thou me?"
He heard and saw, and sought to free
His strain'd eye from the sight;
But Heaven's high magic bound it there,
Still gazing, though untaught to bear
Th' insufferable light.

"Who art thou, Lord?" he falters forth:—
So shall sin ask of heaven and earth
At the last awful day,
"When did we see thee suffering nigh,*
And pass'd thee with unheeding eye?
Great God of judgment, say!"

Ah! little dream our listless eyes
What glorious presence they despise.
While, in our noon of life,
To power or fame we rudely press,—
Christ is at hand, to scorn or bless,
Christ suffers in our strife.

And though heaven gate long since have closed,
And our dear Lord in bliss reposed
High above mortal ken,
To every ear in every land
(Though meek ears only understand)†
He speaks as He did then.

---

* St. Matthew xxv. 44.

† [Is it not to meekness, as the fruit of faith, that the richest encouragements of the Scripture are given? "The *meek* will he guide in judgment, and the *meek* will he teach his way." The same sentiment is imbodied in the promise of the same Psalm, (25,) "The secret of the Lord is *with* them that fear him." It is

"Ah! wherefore persecute ye me?
'Tis hard, ye so in love should be*
With your own endless wo.
Know, though at God's right hand I live,
I feel each wound ye reckless give
To the least saint below.

I in your care my brethren left,†
Not willing ye should be bereft
Of waiting on your Lord.
The meanest offering ye can make—
A drop of water—for love's sake,‡
In heaven, be sure, is stored."

Oh! by those gentle tones and dear,
When Thou hast stay'd our wild career,
Thou only hope of souls,
Ne'er let us cast one look behind,
But in the thought of Jesus find
What every thought controls.

As to thy last Apostle's heart
Thy lightning glance did then impart
Zeal's never-dying fire,

---

the meek and contrite spirit which is described by Isaiah as trembling at God's word. And is not the spirit of meekness the spirit of that precious text, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God?" At least it may be said, that meekness is eminently the element of Christian discipleship.]

* ["It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"—resistance to the will of God is self-destruction. The figure is taken from the eastern mode of driving oxen with a goad, against which the restive animal kicks back, and hurts himself.]

† ["The poor ye have always with you."]

‡ St. Matthew x. 42.

So teach us on thy shrine to lay
Our hearts, and let them day by day
Intenser blaze and higher.

And as each mild and winning note
(Like pulses that round harp-strings float,
When the full strain is o'er)
Left lingering on his inward ear
Music, that taught, as death drew near,
Love's lesson more and more;

So, as we walk our earthly round,
Still may the echo of that sound
Be in our memory stored;
"Christians! behold your happy state;
Christ is in these, who round you wait;
Make much of your dear Lord!"

THE PURIFICATION.*

[FEBRUARY 2.]

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. —*St. Matthew* v. 8.

[Almighty and everliving God, we humbly beseech thy Majesty, that as thy only begotten Son was this day presented in the Temple in substance of our flesh; so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts, by the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

BLESS'D are the pure in heart.
For they shall see our God,
The secret of the Lord is theirs,
Their soul is Christ's abode.

* [This is a double festival. It commemorates the offering under the law made by the blessed mother, and

Might mortal thought presume
To guess an angel's lay,
Such are the notes that echo through
The courts of heaven to-day.

Such the triumphal hymns
On Sion's Prince that wait,
In high procession passing on
Towards His temple-gate.

Give ear, ye kings—bow down,
Ye rulers of the earth—
This, this is He; your Priest by grace,
Your God and King by birth.

No pomp of earthly guards
Attends with sword and spear,
And all-defying, dauntless look,
Their monarch's way to clear.

---

the presentation, in agreement with the provision of the same law, of the incarnate Son, in the temple of his Father. The narrative, as it is recorded by St. Luke i. 22—39, needs no explanation, and can receive no additional interest. In the Book of Common Prayer, the name of the festival is more fully descriptive of its objects,—"The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, commonly called the Purification of St. Mary the Virgin." It is also known in England as "Candlemas day," because formerly at its celebration *candles* were lighted in the churches. "We carry lights in our hands," says a writer of the twelfth century, quoted by Bishop Sparrow, "first, to signify that our light should shine before men; secondly, this we do this day especially in memory of the wise virgins, of whom this blessed virgin is the chief, who went to meet their Lord with their lamps lighted and burning." But a better reason is found in the description given of our Lord on this occasion, by good old Simeon, as "a *light* to *lighten* the Gentiles." The practice was interdicted in 1348, by the order of Archbishop Cranmer.

Yet are there more with him
Than all that are with you—
The armies of the highest heaven,
All righteous, good, and true.

Spotless their robes and pure,
Dipp'd in the sea of light
That hides the unapproached shrine
From men's and angels' sight.

His throne, thy bosom blest,
O Mother undefiled—
That throne, if aught beneath the skies,
Beseems the sinless child.

Lost in high thoughts, "whose son
The wondrous Babe might prove,"
Her guileless husband walks beside,
Bearing the hallow'd dove;*

Meet emblem of His vow,
Who, on this happy day,
His dove-like soul—best sacrifice—
Did on God's altar lay.

But who is he, by years†
Bow'd, but erect in heart,
Whose prayers are struggling with his tears?
"Lord, let me now depart.

Now hath thy servant seen
Thy saving health, O Lord:
'Tis time that I depart in peace,
According to thy word."

* [This was the offering permitted by the law to the poor. "And *if she be not able to bring a lamb*, then she shall bring two turtle-doves."—*Leviticus*, xii. 8 So did he, who was rich, for our sakes become poor.]

† [Simeon, a man just and devout, who waited for the consolation of Israel.]

Yet swells the pomp: one more
Comes forth to bless her God:
Full fourscore years, meek widow, she*
Her heavenward way hath trod.

She who to earthly joys
So long had given farewell,
Now sees, unlook'd for, heaven on earth,
Christ in His Israel.

Wide open from that hour
The temple-gates are set,
And still the saints rejoicing there
The holy Child have met.

Now count his train to-day,
Aud who may meet him, learn:
Him child-like sires, meek maidens find,
Where pride can naught discern.

Still to the lowly soul
He doth himself impart,
And for His cradle and His throne
Chooseth the pure in heart.†

---

* [Anna, a prophetess, a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. Such as these two devout and holy persons are they to whom, in all ages, the Lord's Christ has been revealed.]

† [There are more senses than one in which the blessedness of seeing God belongs to the pure in heart. To them it is given to understand his will here, as hereafter to know even as they are known.]

ST. MATTHIAS' DAY.*

[FEBRUARY 24.]

Wherefore of these men, which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us; beginning from the baptism of John, until that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.—*Acts* i. 21, 22. [*Scripture for the Epistle.*]

[O Almighty God, who into the place of the traitor Judas didst choose thy faithful servant Matthias, to be of the number of the twelve apostles; grant that thy Church, being always preserved from false apostles, may be ordered and guided by faithful and true Pastors, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

WHO is God's chosen priest?
He, who on Christ stands waiting day and night,
Who traced His holy steps, nor ever ceased
From Jordan banks to Bethphage height;

Who hath learned lowliness
From his Lord's cradle, patience from his cross;
Whom poor men's eyes and hearts consent to bless;
To whom, for Christ, the world is loss;

Who both in agony
Hath seen Him and in glory; and in both
Own'd Him divine, and yielded, nothing loath,
Body and soul, to live and die,

* [St. Matthias, probably of the seventy, was chosen under the divine direction, to supply the vacant apostleship of Judas, who, "by transgression, fell." It is remarkable that this event, as St. Peter plainly showed (Acts i. 20), was the subject of express prophecy.]

In witness of his Lord,
In humble following of his Saviour dear;
This is the man to wield th' unearthly sword,
Warring unharm'd with sin and fear.

But who can e'er suffice*—
What mortal—for this more than angel's task,
Winning or losing souls, Thy life-blood's price?
The gift were too divine to ask,

But Thou hast made it sure
By Thy dear promise to Thy Church and Bride,
That Thou, on earth, would'st aye with her endure,
Till earth to heaven be purified.†

Thou art her only spouse,
Whose arm supports her, on whose faithful breast
Her persecuted head she meekly bows,
Sure pledge of her eternal rest.

Thou, her unerring guide,
Stayest her fainting steps along the wild;
Thy mark is on the bowers of lust and pride,
That she may pass them undefiled.

Who then, uncall'd by Thee,
Dare touch thy spouse, thy very self below?
Or who dare count him summon'd worthily,
Except thine hand and seal he show?

Where can thy seal be found,
But on the chosen seed, from age to age

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* [Who is sufficient for these things?—2 *Corinthians* ii. 16.]

† [Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.—*St. Matthew* xxviii. 20.]

By thine anointed heralds duly crown'd,
As kings and priests thy war to wage ?*

Then fearless walk we forth,
Yet full of trembling, messengers of God :
Our warrant sure, but doubting of our worth,
By our own shame alike and glory awed.

Dread Searcher of the hearts,
Thou who didst seal by thy descending Dove
Thy servant's choice, oh help us in our parts,
Else helpless found, to learn and teach thy love.

* [This is a pregnant question. The ministers of Christ either represent him, or act in their own name. If the latter, what authority have they more than other men ? If the former, where is the evidence of their authority to represent Christ ? That he sent the apostles in his own name is evident. That they in like manner sent others is evident. That from the apostles' times the sacred chain has never yet been broken is evident. Where shall the seal be looked for then, but among them who, from age to age, have still been sent by those whom Christ sent, as the Father first sent him ? What warrant surer need there be than theirs, which, issued at the first by Christ himself, has since been handed down, from hand to hand, as duly and as certainly as the inspired record of our faith ?]

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.*

[MARCH 25.]

And the Angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women. — *St. Luke* i. 28. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Oh, Thou who deign'st to sympathize
With all our frail and fleshly ties,
Maker, yet Brother dear,
Forgive the too presumptuous thought,
If, calming wayward grief, I sought
To gaze on Thee too near.

Yet sure 't was not presumption, Lord,
'T was thine own comfortable word
That made the lesson known:
Of all the dearest bonds we prove,
Thou countest sons' and mothers' love
Most sacred, most thine own.

When wandering here a little span,
Thou took'st on Thee to rescue man,

* [This festival, frequently denominated Lady Day, commemorates the annunciation, or declaration made by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, that she should become, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ.]

Thou hadst no earthly sire:
That wedded love we prize so dear,
As if our heaven and home were here,
It lit in Thee no fire.

On no sweet sister's faithful breast
Wouldst thou thine aching forehead rest,
On no kind brother lean:
But who, O perfect filial heart,
E'er did like Thee a true son's part,
Endearing, firm, serene?

Thou wept'st, meek maiden, mother mild,
Thou wept'st upon thy sinless child,
Thy very heart was riven:
And yet, what mourning matron here
Would deem thy sorrows bought too dear
By all on this side heaven?

A son that never did amiss,
That never shamed his mother's kiss,
Nor cross'd her fondest prayer:
Even from the tree he deign'd to bow
For her his agonized brow,
Her, his sole earthly care.*

Ave Maria! blessed Maid!
Lily of Eden's fragrant shade,

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* [There is no passage in the whole scripture of deeper and more touching pathos than that which records the Saviour's commendation of his mother to the beloved disciple. "When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy Son. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother; and from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."—*St. John* xix. 26, 27.]

Who can express the love
That nurtured thee so pure and sweet,
Making thy heart a shelter meet
For Jesus' holy Dove?

Ave Maria! Mother blest,
To whom caressing and caress'd
Clings the Eternal child;
Favour'd beyond Archangel's dream,
When first on thee with tenderest gleam
Thy new-born Saviour smiled:—

Ave Maria! Thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim,*
Yet may we reach thy shrine;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lowly lofty brows
With love and joy like thine.

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* [The Church in this, as in all other things, follows closely after the scriptures. The mother of our Lord she regards and honours as "blessed *among* women;" but she pays her no adoration, and raises her into no competition with the "one mediator between God and man." So Bishop Mant,—

"Blest among women is thy lot:
But higher meed we yield thee not,
Nor more than woman's name.

Nor solemn 'Hail' to thee we pay
Nor prayer to thee for mercy pray,
Nor hymn of glory raise;
Nor thine we deem in God's high throne,
Nor thine the birth-right of thy Son
The Mediator's praise.

Mother of Jesus, Parent dear!
If aught of earthly thou couldst hear,
If aught of human see;
What pangs thy humble heart must wring
To know thy Saviour, Lord and King,
Dishonour'd thus for thee!"]

Bless'd is the womb that bare Him—bless'd*
The bosom where his lips were press'd,
But rather bless'd are they
Who hear his word and keep it well,
The living homes where Christ shall dwell,
And never pass away.

ST. MARK'S DAY.†

[APRIL 25.]

And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder the one from the other.—*Acts* xv. 39.

Compare 2 Timothy iv. 11. Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

[O Almighty God, who hast instructed thy Holy Church with the heavenly doctrine of thy Evangelist Saint Mark; give us grace, that being not like children carried away with every blast of vain doctrine, we may be established in the truth of the holy Gospel through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

OH! who shall dare in this frail scene
On holiest, happiest thoughts to lean,
On friendship, kindred, or on love?

* St. Luke xi. 27, 28.

† [St. Mark is one of the two who are commemorated by the Church as Evangelists; he having written one of the four Gospels, though not called to be an apostle. He was the companion, however, of Paul, and Barnabas, and Peter, with whom he preached the Gospel. He was the sister's son of Barnabas, his mother being that Mary to whose house at Jerusalem the disciples much resorted, (*Acts* xii. 12.) He is commonly known in Scripture as John Mark, and is declared by Eusebius to have been the first bishop of Alexandria.]

Since not apostles' hands can clasp
Each other in so firm a grasp,
But they shall change and variance prove.

Yet deem not, on such parting sad
Shall dawn no welcome dear and glad:
Divided in their earthly race,
Together at the glorious goal,
Each leading many a rescued soul,
The faithful champions shall embrace.

For even as those mysterious Four,
Who the bright whirling wheels upbore
By Chebar in the fiery blast,*
So, on their tasks of love and praise,
The saints of God their several ways
Right onward speed, yet join at last.†

And sometimes even beneath the moon
The Saviour gives a gracious boon,
When reconciled Christians meet,
And face to face, and heart to heart,
High thoughts of holy love impart
In silence meek, or converse sweet.

Companion of the saints! 't was thine
To taste that drop of peace divine,
When the great soldier of thy Lord

* Ezekiel i. 9. They turned not when they went—they went every one straight forward.

† [The whole passage in Ezekiel is most glorious and majestic. The paraphrase here used of the scriptural phrase "straight forward" is Miltonic:—

——————"Yet, I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up, and steer
Right onward."

Sonnet to Cyriac Skinner.]

Call'd thee to take his last farewell,*
Teaching the Church with joy to tell
The story of your love restored.

O then the glory and the bliss,
When all that pain'd or seem'd amiss
Shall melt with earth and sin away!
When saints beneath their Saviour's eye,
Fill'd with each other's company,
Shall spend in love the eternal day!

ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES.†

[MAY 1.]

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low.—*St. James* i. 9, 10. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[O Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life; grant us perfectly to know thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth and the life; that following the steps of thy holy Apostles, Saint Philip and Saint James, we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

DEAR is the morning gale of spring,
And dear th' autumnal eve;
But few delights can summer bring
A poet's crown to weave.

* [It is delightful to see that as the first of the two texts quoted as a motto to these verses, exhibits the apostles as *men* in their contention, the second represents them as *Christian men* in their reconciliation. Of the same Mark, St. Paul elsewhere speaks as being with him in his imprisonment at Rome, and being a "comfort" to him.—*Col.* iv. 11.]

† [Philip, a fisherman of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter, was the first disciple whom our

Her bowers are mute, her fountains dry,
And ever fancy's wing
Speeds from beneath her cloudless sky,
To autumn or to spring.

Sweet is the infant's waking smile,
And sweet the old man's rest—
But middle age by no fond wile,
No soothing calm is blest.

Still in the world's hot restless gleam
She plies her weary task,
While vainly for some pleasant dream
Her wandering glances ask.

O shame upon thee, listless heart,
So sad a sigh to heave,
As if thy SAVIOUR had no part
In thoughts that make thee grieve;

As if along his lonesome way
He had not borne for thee
Sad languors through the summer day,
Storms on the wintry sea.

Youth's lightning flash of joy secure
Pass'd seldom o'er His sprite,—
A well of serious thought and pure,
Too deep for earthly light.

Saviour called, and was numbered with the twelve Apostles. James, also one of the twelve, is called in Scripture the son of Alpheus, or Cleophas, and also the brother of our Lord—that is, his near kinsman, their mothers being sisters. He is called James the less (either in reference to his stature, or his age, or perhaps his inferior prominence in the Gospel), to distinguish him from James the greater, the son of Zebedee. He was also surnamed the Just. He wrote the general Epistle which bears his name, and was the first Bishop of Jerusalem.]

No spring was His—no fairy gleam—
For He by trial knew
How cold and bare what mortals dream,
To worlds where all is true.*

Then grudge not thou the anguish keen
Which makes thee like thy LORD,
And learn to quit with eye serene
Thy youth's ideal hoard.

Thy treasured hopes and raptures high—
Unmurmuring let them go,
Nor grieve the bliss should quickly fly
Which CHRIST disdain'd to know.

Thou shalt have joy in sadness soon;
The pure, calm hope be thine,
Which brightens like the eastern moon
As day's wild lights decline.

Thus, souls, by nature pitch'd too high,
By sufferings plunged too low,
Meet in the Church's middle sky,
Half way 'twixt joy and wo,

To practise there the soothing lay
That sorrow best relieves:
Thankful for all God takes away,
Humbled by all He gives.

* [To, *compared with.*]

ST. BARNABAS.*

[JUNE 11.]

The Son of consolation, a Levite.—*Acts* iv. 36.

[O Lord God Almighty, who didst endue thy holy Apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost; leave us not, we beseech thee, destitute of thy manifold gifts, nor yet of grace to use them alway to thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

THE world's a room of sickness, where each heart
Knows its own anguish and unrest;
The truest wisdom there, and noblest art,
Is his, who skills of comfort best:
Whom by the softest step and gentlest tone
Enfeebled spirits own,
And love to raise the languid eye,
When, like an angel's wing, they feel him fleeting by:—

Feel only—for in silence gently gliding
Fain would he shun both ear and sight,
'Twixt prayer and watchful love his heart dividing,
A nursing father day and night.†

* [Joses, afterwards called Barnabas, was a Jew of Cyprus. From the sale of his estates, and contribution of the value, for the relief of the poor, at the time of his conversion to the Christian faith, he received the latter name, which signifies "son of consolation." He is called in Scripture an Apostle, though not one of the twelve, and was much associated with St. Paul in the work of edifying the Church.]

† [Can there be imagined a delineation more delightful than this of the pastoral visitation of the sick?]

Such were the tender arms, where cradled lay,
In her sweet natal day,
The Church of JESUS; such the love
He to his chosen taught for His dear widow'd
Dove.

Warm'd underneath the Comforter's safe wing
They spread th' endearing warmth around:
Mourners, speed here your broken hearts to
bring,
Here healing dews and balms abound:
Here are soft hands that cannot bless in vain,
By trial taught your pain:
Here loving hearts, that daily know
The heavenly consolations they on you bestow.

Sweet thoughts are theirs, that breathe serenest
calms,
Of holy offerings timely paid,*
Of fire from heaven to bless their votive alms
And passions on GOD's altar laid.
The world to them is closed, and now they shine
With rays of love divine,
Through darkest nooks of this dull earth
Pouring, in showery times, their glow of "quiet
mirth."

New hearts before their Saviour's feet to lay,
This is their first, their dearest joy;
Their next, from heart to heart to clear the
way,†
For mutual love without alloy:

* Acts iv 37. Having land, he sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the Apostles' feet.

† Acts ix. 27. Barnabas took him, and brought him (Saul) to the Apostles. [It is said that Barnabas and Saul were fellow-disciples of Gamaliel, and hence their acquaintance.]

Never so blest, as when in Jesus' roll
They write some hero-soul,
More pleased upon his brightening road
To wait, than if their own with all his radiance glow'd.

O happy spirits, mark'd by God and man
Their messages of love to bear,*
What though long since in heaven your brows began
The genial amaranth wreath to wear,
And in th' eternal leisure of calm love
Ye banquet there above,
Yet in your sympathetic heart
We and our earthly griefs may ask and hope a part.

Comfort's true sons! amid the thoughts of down
That strew your pillow of repose,
Sure, 't is one joy to muse, how ye unknown
By sweet remembrance soothe our woes,
And how the spark ye lit, of heavenly cheer,
Lives in our embers here,
Where'er the Cross is borne with smiles,
Or lighten'd secretly by love's endearing wiles:

Where'er one Levite in the temple keeps
The watch-fire of his midnight prayer,
Or issuing thence, the eyes of mourners steeps
In heavenly balm, fresh gather'd there;
Thus saints, that seem to die in earth's rude strife,
Only win double life;
They have but left our weary ways
To live in memory here, in heaven by love and praise.

* Acts xi. 22; xiii. 2.

ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY.*

[JUNE 24.]

Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers unto the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers.—*Malachi* iv. 5, 6. [*First Evening Lesson.*]

[Almighty God, by whose providence thy servant John Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of thy Son our Saviour, by preaching repentance; make us so to follow his doctrine and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for truth's sake through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

TWICE in her season of decay
The fallen Church hath felt Elijah's eye
Dart from the wild its piercing ray:
Not keener burns, in the chill morning sky,
The herald star
Whose touch afar
Shadows and boding night-birds fly.

* [John the Baptist was the predicted forerunner of Jesus, and his mission forms the connecting link between the Old and New Testaments. He was the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, and took the name, which distinguishes him from John the Apostle and Evangelist, from his administration of the rite of baptism to the multitudes of Judea, and to our blessed Lord. In the case of all the other saints, except St. Paul, their martyrdom is celebrated: in his, his nativity; thus literally fulfilling the prediction of the angel, that many should "rejoice in his birth."]

Methinks we need him once again,
That favour'd seer—but where shall he be found?
By Cherith's side we seek in vain,
In vain on Carmel's green and lonely mound:
Angels no more
From Sinai soar,
On his celestial errands bound.

But wafted to her glorious place
By harmless fire, among the ethereal thrones,
His spirit with a dear embrace
Thee the loved harbinger of Jesus owns,
Well pleased to view
Her likeness true,
And trace, in thine, her own deep tones.

Deathless himself, he joys with thee
To commune how a faithful martyr dies,
And in the blest could envy be,
He would behold thy wounds with envious eyes.
Star of our morn,
Who yet unborn*
Didst guide our hope, where Christ should rise.

Now resting from your jealous care
For sinners, such as Eden cannot know,
Ye pour for us your mingled prayer,
No anxious fear to damp affection's glow,
Love draws a cloud
From you to shroud
Rebellion's mystery here below.

And since we see, and not afar,
The twilight of the great and dreadful day,
Why linger, till Elijah's car
Stoop from the clouds? Why sleep ye? rise and pray,

* St Luke i. 44. The Babe leaped in her womb for joy

Ye heralds seal'd
In camp or field
Your Saviour's banner to display.

Where is the lore the Baptist taught,
The soul unswerving and the fearless tongue?*
The much-enduring wisdom, sought
By lonely prayer the haunted rocks among?
Who counts it gain†
His light should wane,
So the whole world to Jesus throng?

Thou Spirit who the Church didst lend
Her eagle wings, to shelter in the wild,‡
We pray thee, ere the Judge descend,
With flames like these, all bright and undefiled,
Her watch-fires light,
To guide aright
Our weary souls, by earth beguiled.

So glorious let thy pastors shine,
That by their speaking lives the world may learn
First filial duty, then divine,§
That sons to parents, all to Thee may turn;
And ready prove
In fires of love,
At sight of Thee, for aye to burn.

---

* [After his example, says the Church, in the collect for this day, "constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake."]

† St. John iii. 30. He must increase, but I must decrease.

‡ Revelation xii. 14.

§ Malachi iv 6. He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers.

St. Luke i. 17. To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

ST. PETER'S DAY.*

[JUNE 29.]

When Herod would have brought him out, the same night Peter was sleeping.—*Acts* xii. 6. [*Scripture for the Epistle.*]

[O Almighty God, who, by thy Son Jesus Christ, didst give to thy Apostle Saint Peter many excellent gifts, and commandedst him earnestly to feed thy flock; make, we beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

THOU thrice denied, yet thrice beloved,†
  Watch by thine own forgiven friend;
In sharpest perils faithful proved,
  Let his soul love thee to the end.

The prayer is heard—else why so deep
  His slumber on the eve of death?‡

---

* [Peter, a native and fisherman of Bethsaida, was the brother of Andrew, and resided in Capernaum. He was among the first followers of Jesus, and one of the twelve Apostles. To his name Simon, Jesus added that of Peter (or Cephas), the one Greek, and the other the Hebrew name for rock. He, with James the greater and John, was the most favoured of the Apostles. He was illustrious for his zeal and activity, as also for his denial of his Lord, and subsequent repentance. He was more especially the Apostle of the Jews, as Paul was of the Gentiles. His labours in planting the Gospel were great and successful. He has left two general Epistles.]

† St. John xxi. 15—17.

‡ [His being found sleeping, beautifully illustrates his Christian calmness and composure.]

And wherefore smiles he in his sleep
As one who drew celestial breath?

He loves and is beloved again—
Can his soul choose but be at rest?
Sorrow hath fled away, and pain
Dares not invade the guarded nest,

He dearly loves, and not alone:
For his wing'd thoughts are soaring high
Where never yet frail heart was known
To breathe in vain affection's sigh.

He loves and weeps—but more than tears
Have seal'd thy welcome and his love—
One look lives in him, and endears
Crosses and wrongs where'er he rove:

That gracious chiding look,* Thy call
To win him to himself and Thee,
Sweetening the sorrow of his fall,
Which else were rued too bitterly.

Even through the veil of sleep it shines,
The memory of that kindly glance;—
The Angel watching by divines,
And spares awhile his blissful trance.

Or haply to his native lake†
His vision wafts him back, to talk
With Jesus, ere his flight he takes,
As in that solemn evening walk,

When to the bosom of his friend,
The Shepherd, He whose name is Good,

---

* St. Luke xxii. 61.

† [See the passage here so happily alluded to, John xxi. 15—17.]

Did His dear lambs and sheep commend,
Both bought and nourish'd with His blood:

Then laid on him th' inverted tree,*
Which, firm embraced with heart and arm,
Might cast o'er hope and memory,
O'er life and death, its awful charm.

With brightening heart he bears it on,
His passport through the eternal gates,
To his sweet home—so nearly won,
He seems, as by the door he waits,

The unexpressive notes to hear†
Of angel song and angel motion,
Rising and falling on the ear
Like waves in Joy's unbounded ocean.

His dream is changed—the tyrant's voice
Calls to that last of glorious deeds—
But as he rises to rejoice,
Not Herod, but an angel leads.‡

He dreams he sees a lamp flash bright,§
Glancing around his prison room,—
But 't is a gleam of heavenly light
That fills up all the ample gloom.

The flame, that in a few short years
Deep through the chambers of the dead

---

* [He is said to have been crucified with his head downwards.]

† [So Milton of his dead Lycidas,

"And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love."]

‡ [And behold the Angel of the Lord came upon him.]

§ [And a light shined in the prison]

Shall pierce, and dry the fount of tears,
  Is waving o'er his dungeon-bed.

Touch'd he upstarts—his chains unbind—*
  Through darksome vault, up massy stair,
His dizzy, doubting footsteps wind
  To freedom and cool moonlight air.

Then all himself, all joy and calm,
  Though for awhile his hand forego,
Just as it touch'd the martyr's palm,
  He turns him to his task below;

The pastoral staff, the keys of heaven,
  To wield awhile in gray-hair'd might,
Then from his cross to spring forgiven,
  And follow Jesus out of sight.

ST. JAMES' DAY.†

[JULY 25.]

Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.—*St. Matthew* xx. 23. [*Gospel for the Day.*]

[Grant, O merciful God, that as thine holy Apostle Saint James, leaving his father and all that he had, without delay was obedient unto the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him; so we, forsaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be evermore ready to follow thy holy commandments, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Sit down and take thy fill of joy
  At God's right hand, a bidden guest,

* [See the whole passage here so finely paraphrased, Acts xii. 6—19.]

† [James the greater the son of Zebedee, was a

Drink of the cup that cannot cloy,
  Eat of the bread that cannot waste.
O great Apostle! rightly now
  Thou readest all thy Saviour meant,
What time His grave yet gentle brow
  In sweet reproof on thee was bent.

"Seek ye to sit enthroned by me?
  Alas! ye know not what ye ask.
The first in shame and agony,
  The lowest in the meanest task—
This can ye be? and can ye drink
  The cup that I in tears must steep,
Nor from the whelming waters shrink,
  That o'er me roll so dark and deep?"

"We can—thine are we, dearest Lord,
  In glory and in agony,
To do and suffer all Thy word;
  Only be Thou for ever nigh."—
"Then be it so—my cup receive,
  And of my woes baptismal taste:
But for the crown that angels weave
  For those next me in glory placed,

I give it not by partial love;
  But in my Father's book are writ
What names on earth shall lowliest prove,
  That they in heaven may highest sit."

---

fisherman of Galilee. Called by Christ, both he and his brother John straightway followed him. They were named by our Lord, Boanerges, or sons of thunder, expressive of their zeal and devotion to his cause; and with Peter enjoyed his chief confidence. He was the first of the twelve Apostles who suffered martyrdom, being slain, by command of Herod, with a sword.]

Take up the lesson, O my heart;
  Thou Lord of meekness, write it there;
Thine own meek self to me impart,
  Thy lofty hope, thy lowly prayer.

If ever on the mount with Thee
  I seem to soar in vision bright,
With thoughts of coming agony*
  Stay thou the too presumptuous flight:
Gently along the vale of tears
  Lead me from Tabor's sunbright steep,
Let me not grudge a few short years
  With Thee toward heaven to walk and weep!

Too happy, on my silent path,
  If now and then allow'd—with Thee
Watching some placid holy death—
  Thy secret work of love to see;
But, oh! most happy, should thy call,
  Thy welcome call, at last be given—
"Come where thou long hast stored thy all,
  Come see thy place prepared in heaven."

---

* St. Matthew xvii. 12. "Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them" This was just after the transfiguration.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW.*

[AUGUST 24.]

Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. — *St. John* i. 50.

[O Almighty and everlasting God, who didst give to thine Apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe and to preach thy word; grant, we beseech thee, unto thy Church, to love that word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Hold up thy mirror to the sun,
And thou shalt need an eagle's gaze,
So perfectly the polish'd stone
Gives back the glory of his rays:

Turn it, and it shall paint as true
The soft green of the vernal earth,
And each small flower of bashful hue,
That closest hides its lowly birth.

Our mirror is a blessed book,
Where out from each illumined page
We see one glorious Image look,
All eyes to dazzle and engage,

* [Bartholomew, one of the twelve Apostles, is generally believed to have been that Nathaniel of whom Jesus said, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile."]

The Son of God: and that indeed
We see Him as He is, we know,
Since in the same bright glass we read
The very life of things below.—

Eye of God's word!* where'er we turn,
Ever upon us! thy keen gaze
Can all the depths of sin discern,
Unravel every bosom's maze:

Who that has felt thy glance of dread
Thrill through his heart's remotest cells,
About his path, about his bed,
Can doubt what spirit in thee dwells?

"What word is this? Whence know'st thou me?"
All wondering cries the humbled heart,
To hear thee that deep mystery,
The knowledge of itself, impart.

The veil is raised; who runs may read,
By its own light the truth is seen,
And soon the Israelite indeed
Bows down t' adore the Nazarene.

So did Nathaniel, guileless man,
At once, not shame-faced or afraid,
Owning him God, who so could scan
His musings in the lonely shade;

* "The position before us is, that we ourselves, and such as we, are the very persons whom Scripture speaks of· and to whom, as men, in every variety of persuasive form, it makes its condescending though celestial appeal. The point worthy of observation is, to note how a book of the description and the compass which we have represented Scripture to be, possesses this versatility of power; *this eye, like that of a portrait, uniformly fixed upon us, turn where we will.*"—*Miller's Bampton Lectures*, p. 128

In his own pleasant fig tree's shade,*
Which by his household fountain grew,
Where at noon-day his prayer he made,
To know God better than he knew.

Oh! happy hours of heaven-ward thought!
How richly crown'd! how well improved!
In musing o'er the law he taught,
In waiting for the Lord he loved.

We must not mar with earthly praise
What God's approving word hath seal'd;
Enough, if right our feeble lays
Take up the promise He reveal'd;

"The child-like faith, that asks not sight,
Waits not for wonder or for sign,
Believes, because it loves, aright—
Shall see things greater, things divine.

Heaven to that gaze shall open wide,†
And brightest angels to and fro
On messages of love shall glide
'Twixt God above, and Christ below."

So still the guileless man is blest,
To him all crooked paths are straight,
Him on his way to endless rest
Fresh, ever-growing strengths await.‡

God's witnesses, a glorious host,
Compass him daily like a cloud;

---

* ["Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee."]

† ["Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."]

‡ Psalm lxxxiv. 7. They shall go from strength to strength.

Martyrs and seers, the saved and lost,
Mercies and judgments cry aloud.

Yet shall to him the still small voice,
That first into his bosom found
A way, and fix'd his wavering choice,
Nearest and dearest ever sound.

ST. MATTHEW.*

[SEPTEMBER 21.]

And after these things, He went forth and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom, and He said unto him, Follow me: and he left all, rose up, and followed Him.—*St. Luke* v. 27, 28.

[O Almighty God, who by thy blessed Son didst call Matthew from the receipt of custom, to be an Apostle and Evangelist; grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires, and inordinate love of riches; and to follow the same thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*]

Ye hermits blest, ye holy maids,
The nearest heaven on earth,
Who talk with God in shadowy glades,
Free from rude care and mirth;
To whom some viewless teacher brings
The secret lore of rural things,

*[Matthew, called also Levi, was a publican, or collector of taxes, under the Roman government. He was sitting "at the receipt of custom," when, called by Jesus to be his disciple, he arose and followed him. He was appointed one of the twelve Apostles of our Lord, and wrote one of the four Gospels.]

The moral of each fleeting cloud and gale,
The whispers from above, that haunt the twilight vale;

Say, when in pity ye have gazed
On the wreathed smoke afar,
That o'er some town, like mist upraised,
Hung, hiding sun and star,
Then as ye turn'd your weary eye
To the green earth and open sky,
Were ye not fain to doubt how faith could dwell
Amid that dreary glare, in this world's citadel?

But love's a flower that will not die
For lack of leafy screen,
And Christian hope can cheer the eye*
That ne'er saw vernal green;
Then be ye sure that love can bless
Even in this crowded loneliness,
Where ever-moving myriads seem to say,
Go—thou art naught to us, nor we to thee—away!

There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of th' everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

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* [It may doubtless be believed that the simplicity and retirement of the country is better fitted to nourish and increase spiritual religion than the hurry and bustle, the engrossing occupation and artificial associations, of the city. Yet in all places Christianity has found its true disciples; and its pure doctrines and peaceful precepts are adapted for man's reformation and consolation in all places and in all conditions.]

How sweet to them, in such brief rest
As thronging cares afford,
In thought to wander, fancy-blest,
To where their gracious Lord,
In vain, to win proud Pharisees,
Spake, and was heard by fell disease—*
But not in vain, beside yon breezy lake,†
Bade the meek publican his gainful seat forsake:

At once he rose, and left his gold;
His treasure and his heart
Transferr'd, where he shall safe behold
Earth and her idols part;
While he beside his endless store
Shall sit, and floods unceasing pour
Of Christ's true riches o'er all time and space,
First angel of his Church, first steward of his grace;‡

Nor can ye not delight to think§
Where he vouchsafed to eat,
How the Most Holy did not shrink
From touch of sinner's meat;
What worldly hearts and hearts impure
Went with him through the rich man's door,

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* It seems from St. Matthew ix. 8, 9, that the calling of Levi took place immediately after the healing of the paralytic in the presence of the Pharisees.

† [The lake of Gennesaret, by the side of which the custom-house stood, in which Matthew exercised his vocation.]

‡ [*Angel.*—Messenger, Apostle.]

§ [St. Matthew ix. 10. "And Levi (Matthew) made him a great feast in his own house." — Luke v. 29 Matthew, though he mentions the feast, omits, with becoming modesty, to say who gave it.]

That we might learn of Him lost souls to love,
And view his least and worst with hope to meet
above.

These gracious lines shed Gospel light
On Mammon's gloomiest cells,
As on some city's cheerless night
The tide of sun-rise swells,
Till tower, and dome, and bridge-way proud
Are mantled with a golden cloud,
And to wise hearts this certain hope is given
"No mist that man may raise, shall hide the eye
of Heaven."

And oh! if even on Babel shine
Such gleams of Paradise,
Should not their peace be peace divine,
Who day by day arise
To look on clearer heavens, and scan
The work of God untouch'd by man?
Shame on us, who about us Babel bear,
And live in Paradise, as if God was not there!

ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS *

[SEPTEMBER 29.]

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?—*Hebrews* i. 14.

[O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy Angels always do thee service in heaven: so, by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Ye stars that round the Sun of righteousness
In glorious order roll,
With harps for ever strung, ready to bless
God for each rescued soul,
Ye eagle spirits, that build in light divine,
Oh think of us to-day,
Faint warblers of this earth, that would combine
Our trembling notes with your accepted lay.

Your amaranth wreaths were earn'd; and homeward all,
Flush'd with victorious might,
Ye might have sped to keep high festival,
And revel in the light;
But meeting us, weak worldlings, on our way,
Tired ere the fight begun,
Ye turn'd to help us in the unequal fray,
Remembering whose we were, how dearly won:

* [The Church, on this festival, commemorates the services of that order of celestial beings, who are appointed to minister to such as shall be heirs of salvation. Michael is named in the Scripture as the archangel.]

Remembering Bethlehem, and that glorious nigh
When ye, who used to soar
Diverse along all space in fiery flight,
Came thronging to adore
Your God new-born, and made a sinner's child;
As if the stars should leave
Their stations in the far ethereal wild,
And round the sun a radiant circle weave.

Nor less your lay of triumph greeted fair
Our Champion and your King,
In that first strife, whence Satan in despair
Sunk down on scathed wing:
Alone He fasted, and alone He fought;
But when his toils were o'er
Ye to the sacred Hermit duteous brought
Banquet and hymn, your Eden's festal store.

Ye too, when lowest in th' abyss of wo
He plunged to save his sheep,
Were leaning from your golden thrones to know
The secrets of that deep:
But clouds were on his sorrow: one alone
His agonizing call
Summon'd from heaven, to still that bitterest groan,
And comfort Him, the Comforter of all.

Oh! highest favour'd of all spirits create,
(If right of thee we deem,)
How didst thou glide on brightening wing elate
To meet th' unclouded beam
Of Jesus from the couch of darkness rising!
How swell'd thine anthem's sound,
With fear and mightier joy weak hearts surprising,
"Your God is risen and may not here be found."

Pass a few days, and this dull darkling globe
Must yield him from her sight;—
Brighter and brighter streams his glory-robe,
And He is lost in light.
Then, when through yonder everlasting arch,
Ye in innumerous choir
Pour'd, heralding Messiah's conquering march,
Linger'd around his skirts two forms of fire:

With us they stay'd, high warning to impart;
"The Christ shall come again
Even as He goes; with the same human heart,
With the same godlike train."—
Oh! jealous God! how could a sinner dare
Think on that dreadful day,
But that with all thy wounds Thou wilt be there,
And all our angel friends to bring Thee on thy way?

Since to thy little ones is given such grace,
That they who nearest stand
Alway to God in heaven, and see His face,
Go forth at His command,
To wait around our path in weal or wo,
As erst upon our King,
Set thy baptismal seal upon our brow,
And waft us heaven-ward with enfolding wing:

Grant, Lord, that when around th' expiring world
Our seraph guardians wait,
While on her death-bed, ere to ruin hurl'd,
She owns Thee, all too late,
They to their charge may turn, and thankful see
Thy mark upon us still;
Then altogether rise, and reign with Thee,
And all their holy joy o'er contrite hearts fulfil!

ST. LUKE.*

[OCTOBER 18.]

Luke the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. *Colossians* iv. 14.

Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world. Only Luke is with me.—2 *Tim* iv. 10, 11. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[Almighty God, who calledst Luke the Physician, whose praise is in the Gospel, to be an Evangelist and Physician of the soul; may it please thee, that by the wholesome medicines of the doctrine delivered by him, all the diseases of our souls may be healed, through the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

Two clouds before the summer gale
  In equal race fleet o'er the sky;
Two flowers, when wintry blasts assail,
  Together pine, together die
But two capricious human hearts—
  No sage's rod may track their ways,
No eye pursue their lawless starts
  Along their wild self-chosen maze.

He only, by whose sovereign hand
  Even sinners for the evil day†
Were made—who rules the world he plann'd,
  Turning our worst his own good way;

* [St. Luke is said to have been born at Antioch He was a physician; and after his conversion, accompanied St. Paul. He wrote a Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles.]

† Proverbs xvi. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

He only can the cause reveal,
  Why, at the same fond bosom fed,
Taught in the self-same lap to kneel
  Till the same prayer were duly said,

Brothers in blood and nurture too,
  Aliens in heart so oft should prove;
One lose, the other keep, Heaven's clue;
  One dwell in wrath, and one in love.

He only knows,—for He can read
  The mystery of the wicked heart,—
Why vainly oft our arrows speed
  When aim'd with most unerring art:

While from some rude and powerless arm
  A random shaft in season sent
Shall light upon some lurking harm,
  And work some wonder little meant.

Doubt we, how souls so wanton change,
  Leaving their own experienced rest?
Needs not around the world to range;
  One narrow cell may teach us best.

Look in, and see Christ's chosen saint
  In triumph wear his Christ-like chain;
No fear lest he should swerve or faint;
  "His life is Christ, his death is gain." *

Two converts, watching by his side,
  Alike his love and greetings share;
Luke the beloved, the sick soul's guide,
  And Demas, named in faltering prayer.

Pass a few years—look in once more—
  The saint is in his bonds again;

* Philip i 21.

Save that his hopes more boldly soar,*
He and his lot unchanged remain.

But only Luke is with him now:—
Alas! that even the martyr's cell,
Heaven's very gate, should scope allow
For the false world's seducing spell.

'T is sad—but yet 't is well, be sure,
We on the sight should muse awhile,
Nor deem our shelter all secure
Even in the Church's holiest aisle.

Vainly before the shrine he bends,
Who knows not the true pilgrim's part:
The martyr's cell no safety lends
To him, who wants the martyr's heart.

But if there be, who follows Paul
As Paul his Lord, in life and death,
Where'er an aching heart may call,
Ready to speed and take no breath;

Whose joy is, to the wandering sheep
To tell of the great Shepherd's love;†
To learn of mourners while they weep
The music that makes mirth above;

Who makes the Saviour all his theme,
The Gospel all his pride and praise—

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* In the Epistle to the Philippians, "I know that I shall abide and continue with you all:—I count not myself to have apprehended"—i. 25; iii. 13.
In 2 Tim., "I have finished my course," &c.—iv. 7, 8.

† The Gospel of St. Luke abounds most in such passages as the parable of the lost sheep; such as display God's mercy to penitent sinners.

Approach: for thou canst feel the gleam
That round the martyr's death-bed plays;

Thou hast an ear for angel's songs,
A breath the Gospel trump to fill,
And taught by thee the Church prolongs
Her hymns of high thanksgiving still.*

Ah! dearest Mother, since too oft
The world yet wins some Demas frail
Even from thine arms, so kind and soft,
May thy tried comforts never fail!

When faithless ones forsake thy wing,
Be it vouchsafed thee still to see
Thy true, fond nurslings closer cling,
Cling closer to their Lord and thee.

---

* The Christian hymns are all in St. Luke: the Magnificat, Benedictus, and Nunc Dimittis.

ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE.*

[OCTOBER 28.]

That ye should earnestly contend for† the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. — *St. Jude* 3. [*Epistle for the Day.*]

[O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner-stone; grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable unto thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

SEEST thou, how tearful and alone,
And drooping like a wounded dove,
The cross in sight, but Jesus gone,
The widow'd Church is fain to rove?

Who is at hand that loves the Lord?‡
Make haste, and take her home, and bring
Thine household choir, in true accord
Their soothing hymns for her to sing.

---

* [These were both Apostles. Simon is also called *Zelotes*, and the *Canaanite*, to distinguish him from *Simon* Peter. Jude, called *Lebbeus* and *Thaddeus*, was the brother of James the less, and author of the Epistle which bears his name. There is a tradition that they laboured and suffered martyrdom together.]

† *επαγωνιξεσθαι*: — "be very anxious for it:" "feel for it as for a friend in jeopardy."

‡ St. John xix. 27. Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother; and from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

Soft on her fluttering heart shall breathe
The fragrance of that genial isle,
There she may weave her funeral wreath,
And to her own sad music smile.

The spirit of the dying Son
Is there, and fills the holy place
With records sweet of duties done,
Of pardon'd foes, and cherish'd grace.

And as of old by two and two*
His herald saints the Saviour sent
To soften hearts like morning dew,
Where He to shine in mercy meant;

So evermore He deems his name
Best honour'd and his way prepared,
When watching by his altar-flame
He sees his servants duly pair'd.

He loves when age and youth are met,
Fervent old age and youth serene,
Their high and low in concord set
For sacred song, Joy's golden mean.

He loves when some clear soaring mind
Is drawn by mutual piety
To simple souls and unrefined,
Who in life's shadiest covert lie.

Or if perchance a sadden'd heart
That once was gay and felt the spring,
Cons slowly o'er its alter'd part,
In sorrow and remorse to sing,

Thy gracious care will send that way
Some spirit full of glee, yet taught
To bear the sight of dull decay,
And nurse it with all pitying thought;

* St. Mark vi. 7. St. Luke x. 1.

Cheerful as soaring lark, and mild*
As evening blackbird's full-toned lay,
When the relenting sun has smiled
Bright through a whole December day.

* ["Upon such a field one has the best chance of hearing the matin song of the year. While the morning is yet cold there are but a few complaining chirps, and the birds chiefly appear in short flights, which have much the appearance of leaps under the hedges. As the morning gets warm, however, a few are found running along the furrows, and one brown fellow, perched on a clod, partially erecting a crest of feathers, and looking around him with a mingled air of complacency and confidence, utters a 'chur-ree' in an under tone, as if he were trying the lowest and the highest notes of an instrument. The notes are restrained, but they have enough of music in them to cause you to wish for a repetition. That, however, does not in general come; but instead of it there is a single 'churr' murmured from a distance, and so soft as hardly to be audible; and the bird that was stationed upon the clod has vanished, nor can you for some time find out what has become of him. His flight is at first upward, and bears some resemblance to the smoke of a fire on a calm day, gradually expanding into a spiral as it rises above the surface. But no sooner has he gained the proper elevation, than down showers his song, filling the whole air with the most cheerful melody; and you feel more gay, more glee and lifting up of the heart, than when any other music meets your ear.

The opening of the day and of the year comes fresh to your fancy, as you instinctively repeat—

'Hark, the lark at heaven's gate sings.'

The lark indeed is the signal both for the season and the day. The very first sun of the young year calls up the lark to pour his song from the sky. Nor can any thing be more in harmony with the situation in which we find it, than the song of the lark. The bird is the very emblem of freedom; floating in the thin

These are the tones to brace and cheer
The lonely watcher of the fold,
When nights are dark, and foemen near,
When visions fade and hearts grow cold.

How timely then a comrade's song
Comes floating on the mountain air,
And bids thee yet be bold and strong—
Fancy may die, but Faith is there.

ALL SAINTS' DAY.*

[NOVEMBER 1.]

Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.—*Revelation* vii. 3.

[O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*]

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air, with spreading tail, and outstretched wings, and moving its little head delightedly, first to the one side, and then to the other, as if it would communicate its joy around, it at last soars to such an elevation, that if visible at all, it is a mere dark speck in the blue vault of heaven, and carolling over the young year or the young day, while all is bustle and activity, the airy wildness of the song makes its whole character more peculiar and striking."—*Mudie's British Naturalist*, ii. pp. 110 to 114.]

* [This festival is appointed for the commemoration of all those saints and martyrs to whom no particular day is assigned.]

Why blow'st thou not, thou wintry wind,
Now every leaf is brown and sere,
And idly droops, to thee resign'd,
The fading chaplet of the year?
Yet wears the pure aerial sky
Her summer veil, half drawn on high,
Of silvery haze, and dark and still
The shadows sleep on every slanting hill.

How quiet shows the woodland scene!
Each flower and tree, its duty done,
Reposing in decay serene,
Like weary men when age is won,
Such calm old age as conscience pure
And self-commanding hearts ensure,
Waiting their summons to the sky,
Content to live, but not afraid to die.

Sure if our eyes were purged to trace
God's unseen armies hovering round,
We should behold by angels' grace
The four strong winds of heaven fast bound,
Their downward sweep a moment stay'd
On ocean cove and forest glade,
Till the last flower of autumn shed
Her funeral odours on her dying bed.

So in thine awful armory, Lord,
The lightnings of the judgment day
Pause yet awhile, in mercy stored,
Till willing hearts wear quite away
Their earthly stains; and spotless shine
On every brow in light divine
The Cross by angel hands impress'd,
The seal of glory won and pledge of promis
rest.

Little they dream, those haughty souls
Whom empires own with bended knee,
What lowly fate their own controls,
Together link'd by Heaven's decree;—
As bloodhounds hush their baying wild
To wanton with some fearless child,
So Famine waits, and War with greedy eyes,
Till some repenting heart be ready for the skies.

Think ye the spires that glow so bright
In front of yonder setting sun,
Stand by their own unshaken might?
No—where th' upholding grace is won,
We dare not ask, nor Heaven would tell,
But sure from many a hidden dell,
From many a rural nook unthought of there
Rises for that proud world the saints' prevailing prayer.

On, champions blest, in Jesus' name,
Short be your strife, your triumph full,
Till every heart have caught your flame,
And, lighten'd of the world's misrule,
Ye soar those elder saints to meet,
Gather'd long since at Jesus' feet,
No world of passions to destroy,
Your prayers and struggles o'er, your task all praise and joy.

HOLY COMMUNION.

O God of Mercy, God of Might,
How should pale sinners bear the sight,
If, as Thy power is surely here,
Thine open glory should appear?

For now Thy people are allow'd
To scale the mount and pierce the cloud,
And Faith may feed her eager view
With wonders Sinai never knew.

Fresh from th' atoning sacrifice
The world's Creator bleeding lies,
That man, his foe, by whom He bled,
May take Him for his daily bread.

Oh! agony of wavering thought
When sinners first so near are brought!
"It is my Maker—dare I stay?
My Saviour—dare I turn away?"*

Thus while the storm is high within
'Twixt love of Christ and fear of sin,
Who can express the soothing charm,
To feel thy kind upholding arm,

My mother Church? and hear thee tell
Of a world lost, yet loved so well,
That He, by whom the angels live,
His only Son for her would give.†

And doubt we yet? thou call'st again;
A lower still, a sweeter strain;
A voice from mercy's inmost shrine,
The very breath of love divine.

---

* [See the exhortations to the Communion, in the Book of Common Prayer. It would seem that no Christian, who in humility and sincerity reads the Scripture passages on this subject, and the commentary there given, could doubt as to God's will, or his own duty.]

† "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son." See the sentences in the Communion Service after the Confession.

Whispering it says to each apart,
"Come unto me, thou trembling heart;"*
And we must hope, so sweet the tone,
The precious words are all our own.

Hear them, kind Saviour—hear thy spouse
Low at thy feet renew her vows;
Thine own dear promise she would plead
For us her true though fallen seed.

She pleads by all thy mercies, told
Thy chosen witnesses of old,
Love's heralds sent to man forgiven,
One from the cross, and one from heaven †

This, of true penitents the chief,
To the lost spirit brings relief,
Lifting on high the adored name:—
"Sinners to save, Christ Jesus came."‡

That, dearest of thy bosom friends,
Into the wavering heart descends:—
"What! fallen again? yet cheerful rise,§
Thine intercessor never dies."

The eye of faith, that waxes bright
Each moment by thine altar's light,
Sees them, e'en now: they still abide
In mystery kneeling at our side;

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* Come unto me, all ye that travail, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.

† St. Paul and St. John.

‡ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

§ If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

And with them every spirit blest,
From realms of triumph or of rest.
From Him who saw creation's morn,
Of all thine angels eldest born,

To the poor babe, who died to-day,
Take part in our thanksgiving lay,*
Watching the tearful joy and calm,
While sinners taste thine heavenly balm.

Sweet awful hour! the only sound
One gentle footstep gliding round,
Offering by turns on Jesus' part
The cross to every hand and heart.

Refresh us, Lord, to hold it fast;
And when thy veil is drawn at last,
Let us depart where shadows cease,
With words of blessing and of peace.

HOLY BAPTISM.†

WHERE is it, mothers learn their love?—
In every Church a fountain springs
O'er which th' eternal Dove
Hovers on softest wings.

* [The Communion of Saints. There is an admirable sermon on this subject, by the Rev. Charles Forster, the Chaplain, companion and bosom friend of the late inestimable Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Jebb, to whose memory it is dedicated. It was printed, but not published.]

† [There is a soothing sacred beauty in these lines, peculiar and indescribable. The strain they breathe comes sweetly and softly on the soul, like a sleeping infant's breath. We are mistaken if they do not make all Christian mothers in love with Keble's poetry.]

What sparkles in that lucid flood
Is water, by gross mortals eyed:
But seen by faith, 't is blood
Out of a dear Friend's side.

A few calm words of faith and prayer.
A few bright drops of holy dew,
Shall work a wonder there
Earth's charmers never knew.

O happy arms, where cradled lies,
And ready for the Lord's embrace,
That precious sacrifice,
The darling of his grace!

Blest eyes, that see the smiling gleam
Upon the slumbering features glow,
When the life-giving stream
Touches the tender brow!

Or when the holy cross is sign'd,
And the young soldier duly sworn
With true and fearless mind
To serve the Virgin-born.

But happiest ye, who seal'd and blest
Back to your arms your treasure take,
With Jesus' mark impress'd
To nurse for Jesus' sake:

To whom—as if in hallow'd air
Ye knelt before some awful shrine—
His innocent gestures wear
A meaning half-divine:

By whom love's daily touch is seen
In strengthening form and freshening hue,
In the fix'd brow serene,
The deep yet eager view.—

Who taught thy pure and even breath
To come and go with such sweet grace?
Whence thy reposing faith,
Though in our frail embrace?

O tender gem, and full of Heaven!
Not in the twilight stars on high,
Not in moist flowers at even
See we our God so nigh.

Sweet one, make haste and know Him too,
Thine own adopting Father love,
That like thine earliest dew
Thy dying sweets may prove.

CATECHISM.*

Oh say not, dream not, heavenly notes
To childish ears are vain,
That the young mind at random floats,
And cannot reach the strain.

Dim or unheard, the words may fall,
And yet the heaven-taught mind
May learn the sacred air, and all
The harmony unwind.†

* [From the Font our poet passes to the Catechism. We would that he might take all Christian parents and sponsors with him.]

† [The common but groundless objection, that children cannot understand the Catechism, is beautifully and effectually answered in these lines. It applies with equal force to the several branches of human learning. In grammar, in mathematics, in philosophy, the child learns much that he does not fully compre

Was not our Lord a little child,*
Taught by degrees to pray,
By father dear and mother mild
Instructed day by day?

And loved He not of heaven to talk
With children in his sight,
To meet them in his daily walk,
And to his arms invite?

What though around His throne of fire
The everlasting chant
Be wafted from the seraph choir
In glory jubilant?

Yet stoops He, ever pleased to mark
Our rude essays of love,
Faint as the pipe of wakening lark,
Heard by some twilight grove:

Yet is He near us, to survey
These bright and order'd files,
Like spring-flowers in their best array,
All silence and all smiles

Save that each little voice in turn
Some glorious truth proclaims,—
What sages would have died to learn,
Now taught by cottage dames.‡

---

hend. But it is stored in his memory, and as his intellectual powers are developed, he understands its meaning. So it must be with the Scriptures, as well as with the Catechism.]

* ["And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."—*Luke* ii. 51, 52.]

‡ [Truths are made familiar to children in the Sun-

And if some tones be false or low,
What are all prayers beneath
But cries of babes, that cannot know
Half the deep thought they breathe?

In his own words we Christ adore,
But angels, as we speak,
Higher above our meaning soar
Than we o'er children weak:

And yet His words mean more than they,
And yet He owns their praise;
Why should we think, He turns away
From infants' simple lays?

CONFIRMATION.*

The shadow of th' Almighty's cloud
Calm on the tents of Israel lay,
While drooping paused twelve banners proud,
Till He arise and lead the way.

---

day school which Plato and Cicero longed to ascertain Yea,

"Prophets and kings desired to know,
And died without the sight."]

*["It is certainly not a sacrament, but I know it is a means of grace, and I trust and believe, generally speaking, an efficacious means. And how simple the rite itself is; and how very natural in both its parts!

"How natural it seems, that those to whom a gracious God has given life, and health, and happiness, and beauty, should, as soon as they are old enough to look round on the fair creation, amidst which they are placed as the fairest, desire of themselves, to place themselves under the care of its beneficent God. Yet,

Then to the desert breeze unroll'd,
Cheerly the waving pennons fly,
Lion or eagle—each bright fold
A loadstar to a warrior's eye.

So, should thy champions, ere the strife,
By holy hands o'ershadow'd kneel,
So, fearless for their charmed life,
Bear, to the end, thy Spirit's seal.

Steady and pure as stars that beam
In middle heaven, all mist above,
Seen deepest in the frozen stream:—
Such is their high courageous love.

And soft as pure, and warm as bright,
They brood upon life's peaceful hour,
As if the Dove that guides their flight
Shook from her plumes a downy shower.

Spirit of might and sweetness too!
Now leading on the wars of God,

---

alas! there I mistake my ground; that was man's natural condition once, when 'God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good:' but the case is entirely altered now; yet it is meet and right, that if, having been afar off, they have been brought near by the blood of Christ, sprinkled with the waters of baptism, and taken, when unconscious of the privilege, into covenant with the most high God—it is natural, that if they have any feeling, any gratitude, they should desire to renew the vow, and enter into the covenant for themselves. And how simply beautiful our service is—how free from superstitious pomp, and unmeaning ceremony on the one hand—and on the other, how impressive, how solemn: how all things are done decently and in order."—*Scenes in our Parish, by "a Country Parson's Daughter."*

Now to green isles of shade and dew
Turning the waste thy people trod;

Draw, Holy Ghost, thy seven-fold veil
Between us and the fires of youth;
Breathe, Holy Ghost, thy freshening gale,
Our fever'd brow in age to soothe.

And oft as sin and sorrow tire,
The hallow'd hour do Thou renew,
When beckon'd up the awful choir
By pastoral hands, toward Thee we drew;

When trembling at the sacred rail
We hid our eyes and held our breath,
Felt Thee how strong, our hearts how frail,
And long'd to own Thee to the death.

For ever on our souls be traced
That blessing dear, that dove-like hand
A sheltering rock in Memory's waste,
O'ershadowing all the weary land.

MATRIMONY.

There is an awe in mortals' joy,
A deep mysterious fear
Half of the heart will still employ,
As if we drew too near
To Eden's portal, and those fires
That bicker round in wavy spires,
Forbidding, to our frail desires,
What cost us once so dear.

We cower before th' heart-searching eye
In rapture as in pain,
Even wedded Love, till Thou be nigh,
Dares not believe her gain:
Then in the air she fearless springs,
The breath of Heaven beneath her wings,
And leaves her wood-note wild, and sings
A tuned and measured strain.

Ill fare the lay, though soft as dew
And free as air it fall,
That, with thine altar full in view,
Thy votaries would enthrall
To a foul dream, of heathen night,
Lifting her torch in Love's despite,
And scaring with base wildfire light
The sacred nuptial hall.

Far other strains, far other fires,
Our marriage offering grace;
Welcome, all chaste and kind desires,
With even matron pace
Approaching down the hallow'd aisle!
Where should ye seek Love's perfect smile,
But where your prayers were learn'd erewhile,
In her own native place?*

Where but on His benignest brow,
Who waits to bless you here?
Living, He own'd no nuptial vow,
No bower to fancy dear:

* [Marriage should always be performed in the church. There is a departure in this respect from her provisions, and from Christian propriety, much to be regretted.]

Love's very self—for Him no need
To nurse, on earth, the heavenly seed:
Yet comfort in His eye we read
For bridal joy and fear.

'T is He who clasps the marriage band,
And fits the spousal ring,
Then leaves ye kneeling, hand in hand,
Out of His stores to bring
His Father's dearest blessing, shed
Of old on Isaac's nuptial bed,
Now on the board before ye spread
Of our all-bounteous King.

All blessings of the breast and womb.
Of heaven and earth beneath,
Of converse high, and sacred home,
Are yours, in life and death.
Only kneel on, nor turn away
From the pure shrine, where Christ to-day
Will store each flower ye duteous lay,
For an eternal wreath.

VISITATION AND COMMUNION OF THE SICK.

O Youth and Joy, your airy tread
Too lightly springs by Sorrow's bed,
Your keen eye-glances are too bright,
Too restless for a sick man's sight.
Farewell: for one short life we part;
I rather woo the soothing art,
Which only souls in sufferings tried
Bear to their suffering brethren's side

Where may we learn that gentle spell?
Mother of Martyrs, thou canst tell!
Thou, who didst watch thy dying Spouse
With pierced hands and bleeding brows,
Whose tears from age to age are shed
O'er sainted sons untimely dead,
If e'er we charm a soul in pain,
Thine is the key-note of our strain.

How sweet with thee to lift the latch,
Where Faith has kept her midnight watch,
Smiling on wo: with thee to kneel,
Where fix'd, as if one prayer could heal,
She listens, till her pale eye glow
With joy, wild health can never know,
And each calm feature, ere we read,
Speaks, silently, thy glorious Creed.

Such have I seen: and while they pour'd
Their hearts in every contrite word,
How have I rather long'd to kneel
And ask of them sweet pardon's seal!
How bless'd the heavenly music brought
By thee to aid my faltering thought!
"Peace," ere we kneel, and when we cease
To pray, the farewell word is, "Peace."*

I came again: the place was bright
"With something of celestial light"—
A simple altar by the bed
For high Communion meetly spread,

* [At his entrance, the minister says, "*Peace* be to this house, and to all that dwell in it." The blessing, at the close, concludes with these words, "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee *peace* both now and evermore."]

Chalice, and plate, and snowy vest.—
We ate and drank: then calmly blest,
All mourners, one with dying breath,
We sate and talk'd of Jesus' death.

Once more I came: the silent room
Was veil'd in sadly-soothing gloom,
And ready for her last abode
The pale form like a lily show'd,
By virgin fingers duly spread,
And prized for love of summer fled.
The light from those soft smiling eyes
Had fleeted to its parent skies.

O soothe us, haunt us, night and day,
Ye gentle spirits far away,
With whom we shared the cup of grace,
Then parted; ye to Christ's embrace,
We to the lonesome world again,
Yet mindful of th' unearthly strain
Practised with you at Eden's door,
To be sung on, where angels soar,
With blended voices evermore.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier (and they that bare him stood still) and He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise —*St. Luke* vii. 13, 14.

Who says, the wan autumnal sun
Beams with too faint a smile
To light up nature's face again,

And, though the year be on the wane,
With thoughts of spring the heart beguile?

Waft him, thou soft September breeze,
And gently lay him down
Within some circling woodland wall,
Where bright leaves, reddening ere they fall,
Wave gaily o'er the waters brown.

And let some graceful arch be there
With wreathed mullions proud,
With burnish'd ivy for its screen,
And moss, that glows as fresh and green
As though beneath an April cloud.—

Who says the widow's heart must break,
The childless mother sink?—
A kinder, truer voice I hear,
Which even beside that mournful bier
Whence parents' eyes would hopeless shrink,

Bids weep no more—O heart bereft,
How strange, to thee, that sound!
A widow o'er her only son,
Feeling more bitterly alone
For friends that press officious round.

Yet is the voice of comfort heard,
For Christ hath touch'd the bier—
The bearers wait with wondering eye,
The swelling bosom dares not sigh,
But all is still, 'twixt hope and fear.

Even such an awful soothing calm
We sometimes see alight
On Christian mourners, while they wait
In silence, by some church-yard gate,
Their summons to the holy rite.

And such the tones of love, which break
The stillness of that hour,
Quelling th' imbitter'd spirit's strife—
"The Resurrection and the Life
Am I: believe, and die no more."

Unchanged that voice—and though not yet
The dead sit up and speak,
Answering its call; we gladlier rest
Our darlings on earth's quiet breast,
And our hearts feel they must not break.

Far better they should sleep awhile
Within the church's shade;
Nor wake, until new heaven, new earth,
Meet for their new immortal birth,
For their abiding place be made,

Than wander back to life, and lean
On our frail love once more.
'T is sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
How grows in Paradise our store.

Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on,
Through prayer unto the tomb,
Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf,
Gathering from every loss and grief
Hope of new spring and endless home.

Then cheerly to your work again
With hearts new-braced and set
To run, untired, love's blessed race,
As meet for those, who face to face
Over the grave their Lord have met.

CHURCHING OF WOMEN.*

Is there, in bowers of endless spring,
One known from all the seraph band
By softer voice, by smile and wing
More exquisitely bland?
Here let him speed: to-day this hallow'd air
Is fragrant with a mother's first and fondest prayer.

Only let Heaven her fire impart,
No richer incense breathes on earth:
"A spouse with all a daughter's heart,"
Fresh from the perilous birth,
To the great Father lifts her pale glad eye,
Like a reviving flower when storms are hush'd on high.

O what a treasure of sweet thought
Is here! what hope and joy and love
All in one tender bosom brought,
For the all-gracious Dove
To brood o'er silently, and form for heaven
Each passionate wish and dream to dear affection given.

Her fluttering heart, too keenly blest,
Would sicken, but she leans on Thee,

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* [Why is it that this beautiful and most affecting rite is so little observed? Ought not the appropriate thanksgiving, at least, be offered, in acknowledgment of God's great mercy, by every mother?]

Sees Thee by faith on Mary's breast,
And breathes serene and free,
Slight tremblings only of her veil declare*
Soft answers duly whisper'd to each soothing prayer.

We are too weak, when Thou dost bless,
To bear the joy—help, Virgin-born!
By thine own mother's first caress,
That waked thy natal morn!
Help, by the unexpressive smile, that made
A heaven on earth around the couch where Thou wast laid!

COMMINATION.†

The prayers are o'er: why slumberest thou so long,
Thou voice of sacred song?
Why swell'st thou not, like breeze from mountain cave,
High o'er the echoing nave,
The white robed priest, as otherwhile, to guide
Up to the altar's northern side?—

* When the woman comes to this office, the rubric (as it was altered at the last review) directs that she be *decently apparelled*, that is, as the custom and order was formerly, *with a white covering* or *veil.*—*Wheatley on the Common Prayer*, c. xiii. sect. i. 3.

† ["A Commination, or denouncing of God's anger and judgments against sinners, with certain prayers, to be used on the first day of Lent, and at other times, as the ordinary shall appoint." This service is not retained in the Liturgy of the American Church]

A mourner's tale of shame and sad decay
Keeps back our glorious sacrifice to-day:

The widow'd Spouse of Christ: with ashes crown'd,
Her Christmas robes unbound,
She lingers in the porch for grief and fear,
Keeping her penance drear.—
Oh! is it naught to you that, idly gay
Or coldly proud, ye turn away?
But if her warning tears in vain be spent,
Lo, to her alter'd eye the law's stern fires are lent.

Each awful curse, that on Mount Ebal rang,
Peals with a direr clang
Out of that silver trump, whose tones of old
Forgiveness only told.
And who can blame the mother's fond affright,*
Who sporting on some giddy height
Her infant sees, and springs with hurried hand
To snatch the rover from the dangerous strand?

But surer than all words the silent spell
(So Grecian legends tell)

---

* Alluding to a beautiful anecdote in the Greek Anthology, tom. i. 180, ed. Jacobs.—See *Pleasures of Memory*, p. 133.

["While on the cliff with calm delight she kneels,
And the blue vales a thousand joys recall,
See, to the last, last verge her infant steals!
O fly—yet stir not, speak not, lest it fall.
Far better taught, she lays her bosom bare,
And the fond boy springs back to nestle there!"
Rogers, from a Greek Epigram.]

When to her bird, too early scaped the nest,
She bares her tender breast.
Smiling he turns and spreads his little wing,
There to glide home, there safely cling.
So yearns our mother o'er each truant son,
So softly falls the lay in fear and wrath begun.

Wayward and spoil'd she knows ye: the keen blast,
That braced her youth, is past:
The rod of discipline, the robe of shame—
She bears them in your name:
Only return and love. But ye perchance
Are deeper plunged in sorrow's trance:
Your God forgives, but ye no comfort take
Till ye have scourged the sins that in your conscience ache.

O heavy-laden soul! kneel down and hear
Thy penance in calm fear,
With thine own lips to sentence all thy sin;
Then, by the judge within
Absolved, in thankful sacrifice to part
For ever with thy sullen heart,
Nor on remorseful thoughts to brood, and stain
The glory of the Cross, forgiven and cheer'd in vain.

FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED AT SEA.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.—*Isaiah* xliii. 2.

THE shower of moonlight falls as still and clear
Upon the desert main,
As where sweet flowers some pastoral garden cheer
With fragrance after rain;
The wild winds rustle in the piping shrouds,
As in the quivering trees:
Like summer fields, beneath the shadowy clouds
The yielding waters darken in the breeze.

Thou too art here with thy soft inland tones,
Mother of our new birth;*
The lonely ocean learns thy orisons,
And loves thy sacred mirth:
When storms are high, or when the fires of war
Come lightening round our course,
Thou breathest a note like music from afar,
Tempering rude hearts with calm angelic force.

Far, far away, the home-sick seaman's hoard,
Thy fragrant tokens live,
Like flower-leaves in a precious volume stored,
To solace and relieve
Some heart too weary of the restless world;
Or like thy Sabbath Cross,†
That o'er the brightening billow streams unfurl'd,
Whatever gale the labouring vessel toss.

* [The Church.]

† [The allusion is to the British flag, bearing a Cross, which is always displayed on Sundays.]

Oh, kindly soothing in high victory's hour,
Or when a comrade dies,
In whose sweet presence sorrow dares not lower,
Nor expectation rise
Too high for earth; what mother's heart could spare
To the cold cheerless deep
Her flower and hope? but thou art with him there,
Pledge of the untired arm and eye that canno sleep:

The eye that watches o'er wild ocean's dead,
Each in his coral cave,
Fondly as if the green turf wrapt his head
Fast by his father's grave.—
One moment and the seeds of life shall spring
Out of the waste abyss,
And happy warriors triumph with their King
In worlds without a sea,* unchanging orbs of bliss.

* [And there was no more sea.—Rev. xxi. 1.]

GUNPOWDER TREASON.*

[NOVEMBER 5.]

As thou hast testified of me at Jerusalem, so must thou also bear witness at Rome.—*Acts* xxiii. 11.

BENEATH the burning eastern sky
The Cross was raised at morn;
The widow'd Church to weep stood by,
The world, to hate and scorn.

Now, journeying westward, evermore
We know the lonely Spouse
By the dear mark her Saviour bore
Traced on her patient brows.

At Rome she wears it, as of old
Upon th' accursed hill:
By monarchs clad in gems and gold,
She goes a mourner still.

She mourns that tender hearts should bend
Before a meaner shrine,
And upon saint or angel spend
The love that should be thine.

By day and night her sorrows fall
Where miscreant hands and rude

* [The 5th of November is kept as a holiday by the Church of England in commemoration of the wonderful preservation vouchsafed to her on that day, in the year 1605, by the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot.]

Have stain'd her pure ethereal pall
With many a martyr's blood.

And yearns not her parental heart,
To hear their secret sighs,
Upon whose doubting way apart
Bewildering shadows rise?

Who to her side in peace would cling,
But fear to wake, and find
What they had deemed her genial wing
Was error's soothing blind.

She treasures up each throbbing prayer;
Come, trembler, come and pour
Into her bosom all thy care,
For she has balm in store.

Her gentle teaching sweetly blends
With the clear light of truth
The aerial gleam that fancy lends
To solemn thoughts in youth.

If thou hast loved, in hours of gloom,
To dream the dead are near,
And people all the lonely room
With guardian spirits dear,

Dream on the soothing dream at will:
The lurid mist is o'er,
That show'd the righteous suffering still
Upon th' eternal shore.

If with thy heart the strains accord,
That on His altar-throne
Highest exalt thy glorious Lord,
Yet leave Him most thine own;

Oh! come to our Communion Feast;
There present in the heart,
Not in the hands, th' eternal Priest
Will his true self impart.

Thus, should thy soul misgiving turn
Back to th' enchanted air,
Solace and warning thou may'st learn
From all that tempts thee there.

And oh! by all the pangs and fears
Fraternal spirits know,
When for an elder's shame the tears
Of wakeful anguish flow,

Speak gently of our sister's fall;
Who knows but gentle love
May win her at our patient call
The surer way to prove?*

* [Would that there were more to join in this, as truly wise as it is truly pious, sentiment! What have Christian men to do with calling down fire from heaven? When was conversion ever effected by compulsion? Or what was it worth when effected? "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."]

KING CHARLES THE MARTYR.*

[JANUARY 30.]

This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.—1 *St. Peter* ii. 19.

PRAISE to our pardoning God! though silent now
The thunders of the deep prophetic sky,
Though in our sight no powers of darkness bow
Before th' apostles' glorious company;

The martyrs' noble army still is ours:
Far in the north our fallen days have seen
How in her wo the tenderest spirit towers,
For Jesus' sake in agony serene.

Praise to our God! not cottage hearths alone,
And shades impervious to the proud world's glare,
Such witness yield; a monarch from his throne
Springs to his Cross and finds his glory there.

Yes: wheresoe'er one trace of thee is found,
As in the Sacred Land, the shadows fall;
With beating hearts we roam the haunted ground,
Lone battle field, or crumbling prison hall.

And there are aching solitary breasts,
Whose widow'd walk with thought of thee is cheer'd,
Our own, our royal saint; thy memory rests
On many a prayer, the more for thee endear'd.

* [The anniversary of the beheading of King Charles I., in 1649, commemorated in the calendar of the Church of England.]

True son of our dear Mother, early taught
With her to worship and for her to die,
Nursed in her aisles to more than kingly thought,
Oft in her solemn hours we dream thee nigh.

For thou didst love to trace her daily lore,
And where we look for comfort or for calm,
Over the self-same lines to bend, and pour*
Thy heart with hers in some victorious psalm.

And well did she thy loyal love repay;
When all forsook, her angels still were nigh:
Chain'd and bereft, and on thy funeral way,
Straight to the cross she turn'd thy dying eye,†

And yearly now, before the Martyrs' King,
For thee she offers her maternal tears,
Calls us, like thee, to His dear feet to cling,
And bury in his wounds our earthly fears.

The angels hear, and there is mirth in heaven,
Fit prelude of the joy, when spirits won
Like thee to patient faith, shall rise forgiven,
And at their Saviour's knees thy bright example own.

* [Surely an edition of the "Icon Basilike" would well repay the enterprise of publication.]

† His Majesty then bade him (Mr. Herbert) withdraw; for he was about an hour in private with the Bishop (Juxon); and being called in, the Bishop went to prayer; and reading also the 27th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, which relateth the passion of our Blessed Saviour. The King, after the service was done, asked the Bishop, if he had made choice of that chapter, being so applicable to his present condition? The Bishop replied, "May it please your Gracious Majesty, it is the proper lesson for the day, as appears by the Calendar;" which the King was much affected with, so aptly serving as a seasonable preparation for his death that day.—*Herbert's Memoirs*, p. 131.

THE RESTORATION OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.*

[MAY 20.]

And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?—2 *Sam.* xix. 34.

As when the Paschal week is o'er,
Sleeps in the silent aisles no more
The breath of sacred song,
But by the rising Saviour's light
Awakened soars in airy flight,
Or deepening rolls along;†

The while round altar, niche, and shrine,
The funeral evergreens entwine,
And a dark brilliance cast,
The brighter for their hues of gloom,
Tokens of Him, who through the tomb
Into high glory pass'd:

Such were the lights and such the strains,
When proudly stream'd o'er ocean plains
Our own returning cross;
For with that triumph seem'd to float
Far on the breeze one dirge-like note
Of orphanhood and loss.

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* [The anniversary of the Restoration of Charles II. to the throne, in 1660, commemorated in the Church of England.]

† The organ is silent in many Churches during Passion week: and in some it is the custom to put up evergreen boughs at Easter, as well as at Christmas time.

Father and King, O where art thou?
A greener wreath adorns thy brow,
And clearer rays surround:
O for one hour of prayer like thine,
To plead before th' all-ruling shrine
For Britain lost and found!

And he,* whose mild persuasive voice
Taught us in trials to rejoice
Most like a faithful dove,
That by some ruin'd homestead builds,
And pours to the forsaken fields
His wonted lay of love:

---

* Read Fell's Life of Hammond, p. 283—296, Oxford, 1806.

["At the opening of the year 1660, when every thing visibly tended to the reduction of his Sacred Majesty, and all persons in their several stations began to make way and prepare for it, the good doctor (Hammond) was, by the fathers of the Church, desired to repair to London, there to assist in the composure of breaches in the Church: which summons as he resolved unfit either to dispute or disobey, so could he not, without much violence to his inclinations, submit unto. But, finding it his duty, he diverted all the uneasiness of antipathy and aversion into a deliberate preparation of himself for this new theatre of affairs, on which he was to enter. Where his first care was to fortify his mind against the usual temptations of business, place and power. And to this purpose, besides his earnest prayers to God for his assistance and disposal of him entirely to his glory, and a diligent survey of all his inclinations, and therein those which were his more open and less defensible parts, he farther called in, and solemnly adjured that friend of his, with whom he had the nearest opportunity of commerce, to study and examine the last ten years of his life, and with the justice due to a Christian friendship to observe the failances of all kinds, and show them to him: which being accordingly attempted, the product, after a diligent in-

Why comes he not to bear his part,
To lift and guide th' exulting heart?—
A hand that cannot spare
Lies heavy on his gentle breast:
We wish him health; he sighs for rest,
And Heaven accepts the prayer.

quest, only proving the representation of such defects which might have passed for virtue in another person; his next prospect was abroad, what several ways he might do good unto the public: and knowing that the diocess of Worcester was, by the favour of his majesty, designed his charge, he thought of several opportunities of charity unto that place, and, among others, particularly cast in his mind for the repair of the cathedral church, and laid the foundation of a considerable advance unto that work. Which early care is here mentioned as an instance of his inflamed desire of doing good, and singular zeal to the house of God, and the restoring of a decent worship in a like decent place: for otherwise it was far from his custom to look forward into future events, but still to attend and follow after Providence, and let every day bear its own evil. And now, considering that the nation was under its great crisis and most hopeful method of its cure, which yet, if palliate and imperfect, would only make way to more fatal sickness, he fell to his devotions on that behalf, and made those two excellent prayers,* which were published immediately after his death, as they had been made immediately before his sickness, and were almost the very last thing he wrote.

* [See Works, vol. i. 727. The following is submitted as a specimen, from the former of them.

"O blessed Lord, who in thine infinite mercy didst vouchsafe to plant a glorious Church among us, and now in thy just judgment hast permitted our sins and follies to root it up, be pleased at last to resume thoughts of peace towards us, that we may do the like to one another. Lord, look down from heaven, the habitation of thy holiness, and behold the ruins of a desolated Church, and compassionate to see her in the dust. Behold her, O Lord, not only broken, but crumbled, divided into so many sects and factions, that she no longer represents the Ark of the God of

Yes, go in peace, dear placid sprite,
Ill spared; but would we store aright
Thy serious, sweet farewell,
We need not grudge thee to the skies,
Sure after thee in time to rise,
With thee for ever dwell.

"Being in this state of mind, fully prepared for that new course of life, which had nothing to recommend it to his taste but its unpleasantness, (the best allective unto him,) he expected hourly the peremptory mandate which was to call him forth of his beloved retirements.

Israel, where the covenant and the manna were conserved, but the Ark of Noah, filled with all various sorts of unclean beasts: and to complete our misery and guilt, the spirit of division hath insinuated itself as well into our affections as our judgments: that badge of discipleship which thou recommendedst to us is cast off, and all the contrary wrath and bitterness, anger and clamour, called in to maintain and widen our breaches. O Lord, how long shall we thus violate and defame that gospel of peace that we profess? How long shall we thus madly defeat ourselves, and lose that Christianity which we pretend to strive for? O thou which makest men to be of one mind in a house, be pleased so to unite us, that we may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. And now that in civil affairs there seems some aptness to a composure, O let not our spiritual differences be more unreconcilable. Lord, let not the roughest winds blow out of the sanctuary: let not those which should be thy ambassadors for peace still sound a trumpet for war: but do thou still reveal thyself to all our Elijahs in that still small voice which may teach them to echo thee in the like meek treatings with others. Lord, let no unseasonable stiffness of those that are in the right, no perverse obstinacy of those that are in the wrong, hinder the closing of our wounds; but let the one instruct in meekness, and be thou pleased to give the other repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. To this end, do thou, O Lord, mollify all exasperated minds, take off all animosities and prejudices, contempt and heart-burnings, and, by uniting their hearts, prepare for the reconciling their opinions. And that nothing may intercept the clear sight of thy truth, Lord, let all private and secular designs be totally deposited, that gain may no longer be the measure of our godliness, but the one great and common concernment of truth and peace may be unanimously and vigorously pursued, &c."]

Till then, whene'er with duteous hand
Year after year, my native land
Her royal offering brings,
Upon the altar lays the crown,
And spreads her robes of old renown
Before the King of kings,

"But in the instant, a more importunate, though infinitely more welcome summons engaged him on his last journey: for, on the 4th of April, he was seized with a sharp fit of the stone, with those symptoms that are usual in such cases; which yet, upon the voidance of a stone, ceased for that time. However, on the 8th of the same month, it returned again with greater violence: and though after two days the pain decreased, the suppression of urine yet continued, with frequent vomitings, and a distention of the whole body, and likewise shortness of breath, upon any little motion. When, as if he had, by some instinct, a certain knowledge of the issue of his sickness, he almost, at its first approach, conceived himself in hazard: and whereas at other times, when he saw his friends about him fearful, he was used to reply cheerfully, 'that he was not dying yet;' now in the whole current of his disease, he never said any thing to avert suspicion, but addressed unto its cure, telling his friends with whom he was, 'that he should leave them in God's hands, who could supply abundantly all the assistance they could either expect or desire from him, and who would so provide, that they should not find his removal any loss.' And when he observed one of them with some earnestness pray for his health and continuance, he with tender passion replied, 'I observe your zeal spends itself all in that one petition for my recovery; in the interim you have no care of me in my greatest interest, which is, that I may be perfectly fitted for my change when God shall call me: I pray let some of your fervour be employed that way.' And being pressed to make it his own request to God to be continued longer in the world, to the service of the Church, he immediately began a solemn prayer, which contained, first, a very humble and melting acknowledgment of sin, and

Be some kind spirit, likest thine,
Ever at hand, with airs divine
The wandering heart to seize;
Whispering, "How long hast thou to live,
That thou shouldst hope or fancy give
To flowers or crowns like these?"

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a most earnest intercession for mercy and forgiveness through the merits of his Saviour: next, resigning himself entirely into his Maker's hands, he begged that if the divine wisdom intended him for death, he might have a due preparation for it; but if his life might be in any degree useful to the Church, even to one single soul, he then besought Almighty God to continue him, and by his grace to enable him to employ that life he so vouchsafed, industriously and successfully. After this he did with great affection intercede for this Church and nation, and with particular vigour and enforcement prayed for sincere performance of Christian duty, now so much decayed, to the equal supplanting and scandal of that holy calling; that those who professed that faith might live according to the rules of it, and to the form of godliness, superadd the power. This, with some repetitions, and more tears, he pursued, and at last closed all in a prayer for the several concerns of the family where he was. With this he frequently blessed God for so far indulging to his infirmity, as to make his disease so painless to him; withal to send it to him before he took his journey, whereas it might have taken him in the way or at his inn, with far greater disadvantages."—*Bishop Fell's Life of Dr. Hammond, in Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography*, vol. v. p. 428.]

THE ACCESSION.*

As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.—*Joshua* i. 5.

The voice that from the glory came
To tell how Moses died unseen,
And waken Joshua's spear of flame
To victory on the mountains green,
Its trumpet tones are sounding still,
When kings or parents pass away,
They greet us with a cheering thrill
Of power and comfort in decay.

Behind the soft bright summer cloud
That makes such haste to melt and die,
Our wistful gaze is oft allow'd
A glimpse of the unchanging sky:
Let storm and darkness do their worst;
For the lost dream the heart may ache,
The heart may ache, but may not burst;
Heaven will not leave thee nor forsake.

One rock amid the weltering floods,
One torch in a tempestuous night,
One changeless pine in fading woods;—
Such is the thought of Love and Might,
True Might and ever-present Love,
When Death is busy near the throne,
And Sorrow her keen sting would prove
On monarchs orphan'd and alone.

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* [The anniversary of the day on which the reigning king comes to the throne.]

In that lorn hour and desolate,
  Who could endure a crown? but He,
Who singly bore the world's sad weight,
  Is near, to whisper, "lean on me;
Thy days of toil, thy nights of care,
  Sad lonely dreams in crowded hall,
Darkness within, while pageants glare
  Around—the cross supports them all.'

O promise of undying love!
  While monarchs seek thee for repose,
Far in the nameless mountain cove
  Each pastoral heart thy bounties knows.
Ye, who in place of shepherds true
  Come trembling to their awful trust,
Lo here the fountain to imbue
  With strength and hope your feeble dust.

Not upon kings or priests alone
  The power of that dear word is spent;
It chants to all in softest tone
  The lowly lesson of content;
Heaven's light is poured on high and low;
  To high and low Heaven's Angel spake;
"Resign thee to thy weal or wo,
  I ne'er will leave thee nor forsake."

ORDINATION.

After this, the Congregation shall be desired secretly in their prayers to make their humble supplications to God for all these things; for the which prayers there shall be silence kept for a space.

After which shall be sung or said by the Bishop (the persons to be ordained Priests all kneeling,) "Veni Creator Spiritus."—*Rubric in the Office for Ordering of Priests.*

'Twas silence in thy temple, Lord,
When slowly through the hallow'd air
The spreading cloud of incense soar'd,
Charged with the breath of Israel's prayer

'Twas silence round thy throne on high,
When the last wondrous seal unclosed,*
And in the portals of the sky
Thine armies awfully reposed.

And this deep pause, that o'er us now
Is hovering, comes it not of Thee?
Is it not like a mother's vow,
When with her darling on her knee

She weighs and numbers o'er and o'er
Love's treasure hid in her fond breast,
To cull from that exhaustless store
The dearest blessing and the best?

And where shall mother's bosom find,
With all its deep love-learned skill,

* Rev. viii. 1. When he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour.

A prayer so sweetly to her mind.
As, in this sacred hour and still,

Is wafted from the white-robed choir,
Ere yet the pure high-breathed lay,
'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,"
Rise floating on its dove-like way.

And when it comes, so deep and clear
The strain, so soft the melting fall,
It seems not to th' entranced ear
Less than thine own heart-cheering call,

Spirit of Christ—thine earnest given
That these our prayers are heard, and they,*
Who grasp, this hour, the sword of Heaven,
Shall feel thee on their weary way.

Oft as at morn or soothing eve
Over the holy fount they lean,
Their fading garland freshly weave,
Or fan them with thine airs serene.

Spirit of Light and Truth! to Thee
We trust them in that musing hour,
Till they, with open heart and free,
Teach all Thy word in all its power.

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* [It were much to be desired, that the "prayers for those to be admitted into Holy Orders," which are included among the occasional prayers which follow immediately after the Litany, should be used as often as may be, previously to every ordination. The effect could not but be favourable, not only on the candidate for whom, but on the congregation by whom, they are used.]

When foemen watch their tents by night,
And mists hang wide o'er moor and fell,
Spirit of Counsel and of Might,
Their pastoral warfare guide Thou well.

And oh! when worn and tired they sigh
With that more fearful war within,
When Passion's storms are loud and high,
And brooding o'er remember'd sin

The heart lies down*—O mightiest then,
Come ever true, come ever near,

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*[THE ORDINAL.

Alas for me if I forget
The memory of that day
Which fills my waking thoughts, nor yet
E'en sleep can take away!
In dreams I still renew the rites
Whose strong but mystic chain
The spirit to its God unites,
And none can part again

How oft the Bishop's form I see,
And hear that thrilling tone
Demanding with authority
The heart for God alone;
Again I kneel as then I knelt,
While he above me stands,
And seem to feel as then I felt
The pressure of his hands.

Again the priests in meet array,
As my weak spirit fails,
Beside me bend them down to pray
Before the chancel rails;
As then, the sacramental host
Of God's elect are by,
When many a voice its utterance lost
And tears dimmed many an eye.

And wake their slumbering love again,
Spirit of God's most holy fear!

As then they on my vision rose,
The vaulted aisles I see,
And desk and cushion'd book repose
In solemn sanctity,—
The mitre o'er the marble niche,
The broken crook and key,
That from a Bishop's tomb shone rich
With polish'd tracery;

The hangings, the baptismal font,
All, all, save me, unchanged,
The holy table, as was wont,
With decency arranged;
The linen cloth, the plate, the cup,
Beneath their covering shine,
Ere priestly hands are lifted up
To bless the bread and wine.

The solemn ceremonial past,
And I am set apart
To serve the Lord, from first to last,
With undivided heart:
And I have sworn, with pledges dire
Which God and man have heard,
To speak the holy truth entire
In action and in word.

O Thou who in thy holy place
Hast set thine orders three,
Grant me, thy meanest servant, grace
To win a good degree:
That so replenish'd from above
And in my office tried,
Thou may'st be honour'd, and in love
Thy Church be edified!

Rev. William Croswell.]

THE END.